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SUNDAY MORNING, FEBRUARY 23, 1896.

For the Sunday Crescent.

To Paul Profane.

BY THE MANAGER.

If what thou tellest me be true,

Unhappy man!

Well may'st thou shun the lily's hue!

Thou hast my can!

And yet with all thy wild pretence,

Beneath is all,

I seem to see some tear-drops glistening,

Unhappy Paul!

Ah, why not shun the tempting bow,

With misery bragg'd!

And crush the chains thy covering seal

So long hath hung'd!

Too young, too bright, for morbid gloom,

O, rise again!

Spare me the task to chide thy doom,

Al! I Paul Profane!

New Orleans, February 16, 1896.

For the New Orleans Sunday Crescent.

Apology to the "Detestamental."

I was wrong in my surmising,

(It really is quite funny.)

But I thought you were devising

To victimize poor Johnny,

By jumping into oblivion!

And playing "Miss" behind a screen!

You see my name is "Lily,"

And I fear'd that Mr. Johnny

Might suppose that—that—I really—

(Which wouldn't be so funny.)

Wish'd to change his condition,

By a Leap-Year proposition!

New Orleans, Feb. 16, 1896.

Written for the Sunday Crescent.

BARTRELLE.

CHAPTER IX.—CONTINUED.

And no reply. Still more pallid grew the

ashen lips, and the blue veins rose full and

clear on the white, smooth temples. The fluttering

breath came quick and short from the

laboring breast, and a moan heavy with untold

agony trembles on the air. "The eyes of the

sufferer slowly unclose; and as he sees his

consin still at his side, a smile of touching

tenderness lights up his face. "Thank God,

he wakes! I feared that sleep," muttered the

surgeon, as he poured from a vial a colorless

liquid and held it to the patient's lips—

"Here, Dick, drink this—it will do you

good!"

He swallowed it and almost instantly fell

asleep.

"Oh, doctor! will he live?" and the young

face was turned to the physician with a look

of such bitter agony, that the good old man

found it impossible to express the fears he

really entertained.

"It all depends on the next few hours—if

he rallies, all will be well; but his loss of

blood has been prodigious; and afraid to

encourage hopes that might prove premature,

he said no more. And again silence reigned

throughout the department, broken only by

the scarcely breathed moan of the sufferer,

and the stifled sob of the watching girl.

CHAPTER X.

Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,

Lately and lost to lights forever more;

Saw whom to thine my heart responsive swells,

Then trembles into silence as before.

COURTNEY.

Night had thrown its gloom over the sick

chamber. The light of the dimly burning

candle cast many a flickering shadow around

the group that sat silent and sad in the room

of the wounded Bartrelle.

Hope had not died in their hearts, but the

wish for change could not be discerned. The

pallid hue of the face was flushed at

intervals by the fitful beating of fever; and

then, again, the wildly beating pulse, sunk so

low that even the eye of affection could

hardly trace its faint, exhausted thrills. Still

life clung to the weakened frame, and to

Laura it seemed, his state if not improved,

had experienced for many hours no symptoms

which could be called more unfavorable.

To the eye of affection what sickness is

young woman of pitchless beauty. Laura

could scarcely restrain an involuntary expres-

sion of her admiration. Never before had she

seen a being so faultlessly beautiful. But

even this did not prepare her for the thrilling

charm which the sweet flexible voice, with its

quaint foreign accent, exercised upon her.

"It was her respect and confidence at once.

"Be not surprised, lady, at my presence

My right and duty to watch your cousin in his

extremity, even you will not question when

I tell you that I am—"

She approached and breathed a single word

into Laura's ear. Its effect was electrical. It

caused Laura to recoil in intense amazement.

"Merciful heavens! Is it you indeed?" she

exclaimed, with dilating eyes and quivering

lip. "Is it you indeed? Oh! how came you

here?" and the words came out with a low,

sorrowful wail, so intense and pitiful that it

sounded in that silent chamber like the cry of

the heart as it breaks over the bier of the

dying.

"Yes, lady, I am Zera," said the beautiful

Persian, and bound by the solemn covenant

made between the living and the dead. I am

come to fulfill my part."

"God bless you, my dear Zera! Pardon

my first expressions—they were wrong from

me in my great surprise," and she took her

in her arms and kissed her repeatedly, while

over each face a joyful light was shining.

"Yes, your right to watch beside him none

may question. We have never met before,

but we are sisters now. Oh! how I have

longed to see you; and it is you in very

truth!" and a smile of such infinite sweetness

flitted across the face of the stately lady, that

Zera involuntarily knelt at her feet to invoke

a blessing.

"Bless you Zera—a thousand blessings on

your head, my dear, darling, beautiful Zera.

They did not exaggerate when they told how

beautiful you were. But I shall find time to

admire you as much as I please, for you will

not leave me. We will watch Richard together.

He is my betrothed—will be my husband—he

is your—"

"Nay, lady, speak it not—let the tie that

binds us be secret at present," and the small

white hand was raised with a deprecating

gesture, while the deep, intense black eyes were

raised with a look of passionate entreaty.

"It is sufficient, lady, that you recognize the

tie, and have welcomed me so kindly. Go, you,

and snatch a few hours of needed repose.

I will watch beside your lover as a mother

guards her first-born; go, lady, go." But

Laura resisted her kindly meant entreaties

and begged to be permitted to stay with her.

"We have never met before, and I beg you

will let me stay. I am not tired with my

watch. Indeed, I believe I have slept, and

now feel no need of additional rest, and I so

much desire to talk with you and know you

better. We two, of all others, ought to be

acquainted; let us, therefore, improve this

opportunity."

And Laura seated herself by the young

stranger, and took the soft white hand in her

own, pressing and caressing it with a gentle

grace that charmed her visitor. The great

black eyes were looking at the stately girl

with inexpressible tenderness. To a nature so

impressible as Zera's, this act of simple courtes-

y was in itself an assurance of confiding

love, and she repaid it with the tenderest

gratitude. Beautiful and good, she could not

help loving her. And besides her welcome

had been so free, the restraint a stranger feels

had been removed so kindly, her claims so

cordially recognized, that she felt that she

could never do enough to testify how much

she felt it all, and how grateful she was.

"You are very kind to me, lady; more

kind than I could have expected you to be,"

Zera replied. "Coming into your presence

so suddenly, and without the advantage of

Richard's protection, I could not have antici-

ipated so much kindness. But indeed I am

very grateful to you. It is not often, I imagine,

that a stranger, a foreigner, all but

friendless, meets with so generous a recep-

tion."

girl all the pain which watchful care and

earnest love could avoid, and to this end she

perceived that the most effectual way of accom-

plishing it would be in faithfully adhering

to the incognito Zera sought to preserve. But

she could not help feeling how unhappy the

life must be which necessity compelled to

resort to such expedients. Zera noted this

expression which the truthful face revealed,

and at once sought to remove the impression.

"You are mistaken, dear Laura, in sup-

posing that I am necessarily unhappy. I could

have avoided the necessity of this conceal-

ment by remaining at home—I could not do

it by returning to Persia at once. But I choose

to incur it, because of the natural affections

which none of us can alienate or subdue.

While I remain here, it is necessary for me to

preserve this incognito, for a reason that you,

perhaps, have not divined—the habits of my

country. These are different from those

which prevail here; and were I to openly dis-

play my manner of living, this of itself would

excite curiosity, and, perhaps, end in surveil-

lance. I have many of my people with me;

they are necessary to my happiness and pro-

tection. I could not domesticate this retinue

in a private family or hotel. I could not tol-

erate the curiosity of the Americans, nor they

my exclusiveness; besides, these people know

no language but their own, and are partial to

the dress and customs of their country. Now

you see some of my reasons," said Zera, smil-

ing in her companion's eager questioning face.

"But, dear Zera, I never thought of your

staying anywhere else than here. Our house

is large—it could well afford room for a dozen

additional servants; besides, in this great city

you will need some sort of protection—why

can't you stay here?"

"Believe me, dear Laura, I am very grate-

ful, but I am well supplied with everything

essential to my comfort and protection. I

have purchased a residence in a secluded part

of the city, on Washington Avenue, and live

there surrounded by my people. Besides, dear

Laura, you could only afford me room for

a dozen servants, while I have over thirty.

I could never permit them to depart from the

allegiance they owe me, and their manner of

rendering this would excite ridicule in your

republican country. But, I will be with you

as much as possible, and the rest of the time

you shall spend with me. And then, dear

Laura, you will see how an Eastern despot

lives among her slaves," and Zera's rich,

clear laugh thrilled like a ripple of joy on the

starred air.

"Oh, that will be splendid!" said Laura,

laughing in concert.

The low utterance of the ladies fell upon

the ear of the wounded man in a soft mon-

otone inexpressibly soothing, calming the

flushed and fevered body into quiet repose.

His senses had not gathered the words or

purport of the conversation, but the soft,

sweet cadence of the two voices dearest to

him, even in that fitful sleep, carried to

his mind a sense of security, of happiness,

which penetrated his heart with ineffable

content.

In this way the light of dawn brightened

into day, and the long hours stole silently

along, bringing hope to the hearts of the

watchers, and returning strength and con-

sciousness to their patient.

On the pale face had begun to quiver a

delicate rose tint not breathed there by fever,

and throughout the weakened frame had

begun to thrill a sense of animation and

returning vigor not caused by pain. The

pulse had assumed a more natural and even

stroke, and respiration was less labored and

easier. The hour of danger had passed, and

with careful watching and attention Richard

Bartrelle would recover.

The doctor came and went; his patient

needed only care; that sound sweet sleep

was gathering healing for the exhausted body

faster than any drug or medicine could lend it.

Oh! how their hearts leaped, their pulses

thrilled, as the kind old surgeon smiled his

answer into their eager, questioning eyes.

Faithful nurses! how they loved the old man

for his assurance.

"Let him sleep girls; let him sleep; he'll

do well enough, only don't let him get excited.

Ah! the young dog, to bring so much trouble

on two such pretty faces!" and smiling and

bowing gallantly the grand old surgeon quit-

ted the apartment, followed by the hurried,

sparkling eyes and faces dimpled all over

with smiles, that flashed and shone like the

sparkle of the dew in the shimmer of the sun.