

SATURDAY, MAY 7, 1904

THE ANSWER OF THE NIGHT.

The firmament showeth His handiwork. - Psalms 136. When night her sable veil has flung...

WISDOM OF THE WISE

By STELLA BEEDING

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The old man sat in his corner, his silver hair and beard forming a faint aureole about his face.

"And this is to be the last night," said Steve.

"You will let me know where you are sometimes?" Marianina asked, leaning forward eagerly.

Their dark, handsome heads were close together. He was the first to draw back. The room suddenly became stifling.

Errol ran up to the old man and covered his face with soft, moist little kisses. The toy was finished.

"Dear Uncle Lucien," she cried in her imperious way, "lift up my hair and put the beads around my neck."

Marianina's face was bowed in her hands. Steve thought she was crying, but it was not so. It came upon him with a rush what a beautiful woman she would be.

"Just think, Steve, what the place will be to me without you! You seem a part of it; I cannot think of it without you. I was a mere baby, you know, when Uncle Lucien found you and brought you here.

"I am not so sure of that, Steve. Every corner here is a crying memory, every bush a thought. But remember, Steve, though I will not know where you are many times, I will always be with you in thought, always touch you in thought. But I am afraid—"

"Marianina—Marianina, don't!" he pleaded softly, as one reasons with a naughty child.

"Oh, forgive me, forgive me, and this the last night, too," she said.

"The afternoon sunlight a pale irradiance, came in through the window and spread across the white bed, bleaching the whole room with its light.

"I know! I have seen it all, all, dear child," he said, huskily.

"The afternoon sunlight a pale irradiance, came in through the window and spread across the white bed, bleaching the whole room with its light.

"The last night!" whispered Steve, squeezing her fingers.

firm, energetic answering pressure. The door flung open and Errol, with her cloud of fair hair, stood in the doorway.

"But he did not tell me that he loved me and wished to marry me," Marianina told herself in the middle of the night, as she turned over her pillow wearily.

"Marianina:—I am coming back to the old home. I have failed. In all these six years I have not even gained a foothold. The whirl of the urgent city presses upon me and crushes me down. Life is too tumultuous here; I cannot think. Even now I am on my way to you, Marianina. Oh! I have thought of you many, many times. How I long to hear your voice!

"I see other women about me, but to me they are as if they were not. They are strange; not one of them is like you. They chatter like magpies; they are tawdry; and neither do they like me, for when they see me they stick their tongues in their cheeks and laugh.

"So before many days I shall see you and Errol and the good old man. Do you remember, Marianina, I said I would fight the world? I did, but I could not conquer it; instead, it conquered me.

"I enclose in this letter a little pair of white silk stockings for Errol to wear on Sundays. Stephen Balfe."

"Steve's come!" cried Errol one morning, leading a great, bearded, shabbily clothed man into the tidy little kitchen.

Marianina held out both hands, and choked and could not speak. It was an exquisitely keen pleasure to see him; it was also an exquisitely keen pain. She noted the down-trodden shoes, his elbows ready to push through and his heart ached.

"Marianina," said Steve one afternoon several months after his arrival, "will you walk up and down the old path with me?"

He drew her arm through his. He had always been very gentle with her. When they reached the end he stopped and turned to her.

"You must know, Marianina, how I respect you, how sincerely I admire and care for you; do you think, dear, you



SHE FOUND THE OLD MAN IN HIS CUSTOMARY CORNER.

could ever make up your mind to throw yourself away on a worthless thing like me? I think you love me. Do you not, Marianina? Or have I mistaken the character of your kindness?"

Her gaze fell away from him. It was so different from what she had always hoped for, and the bitter part of it was he was trying to be kind to her to blind his own eyes to the true dictation of his heart. She felt rebellious and wanted to tell him all. Instead, she turned from him and swallowed hard.

"Forgive me! Forgive me, Marianina!" he cried. "I see I was mistaken. You thought of me as a brother only. Again I ask you to forgive me for being so indelicate."

Each word was like the turning of a rusty weapon in her breast.

"Let us begin to walk again," she said, quietly.

She could not help but hear the note of gladness, or relief, that crept into his speech. Great, hot, pitiful sobs rose up in her throat. Presently she raised her head and looked at him with her calm eyes.

"Do not let us speak of this again, Steve," she said gently, as she twisted nervously at the frilling in her sleeve.

They heard a soft outbreak of laughter, and their eyes took the same direction. Errol with the teasing gaiety of a child romped under the trees with her pet spaniel. A great bar of sunlight cut through the branches like a golden glaive, and fell across her bright head.

"Isn't she beautiful, Marianina?" he asked. "She seems to me like a being from another sphere."

"Go and talk to her, Steve, or play with her; I must go into the house. I think Uncle Lucien wants me."

She found the old man in his customary corner, and threw herself down beside him, and, folding her arms over his knees, rested her face on them. Her pretty, soft curls breaking from restraint, tumbled about her shoulders and over his shrunken old knees. Her little white hands that came out of her black sleeves worked convulsively. Shortly she looked up, and her thoughtful eyes were dry and glittering.

"Uncle Lucien," she began.

He pressed her head down again, stroking it gently with his withered hand.

"I know! I have seen it all, all, dear child," he said, huskily.

The afternoon sunlight a pale irradiance, came in through the window and spread across the white bed, bleaching the whole room with its light.

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Card of Thanks. After expressing her gratitude to all who administered to my dear husband in his fatal sickness, a Leavenworth (Kan.) woman adds in her card of thanks, "and especially the accident insurance agent, Mr. Fairlock, who assures me that congestion of the stomach comes under the head of accidents."

A Misfortune. "Yes," he said, "I am up to my neck in debt, but it's my misfortune, not my fault." "Your misfortune?" "Yes. You see, I have a faculty for making such excellent impressions upon people that they still persist in trusting me."—London Tit-Bits.

Nature's Variety. Nature's infinite variety is well illustrated in the collection of photographs of snow crystals made during the past 20 years by Mr. W. A. Bentley, of Vermont. He has now more than 1,000 photographs of individual crystals, and among them no two alike.

Use Both Sides. It is a curious fact that the teeth that are seldom used decay more rapidly than those that have daily work to do. It is a fact, however, and, being a fact, the thing to do is to take pains to eat with both sides of the mouth equally.

Famous Rhine Falls. It costs a foreigner 20 cents and a Swiss ten cents to see the famous falls of the Rhine at Schaffhausen. The local newspapers are becoming alarmed at the damage that is being done by manufacturers who tap the falls to get electric power.

Nature. An ancient saying is: "A bare soil grows poorer and a covered soil grows richer." If nothing is planted or grown, weeds take the right of way, spring up, thrive, thus nature takes the matter in hand.—Farm Journal.

The Other Ones. "Come, now," said mamma, who had taken the children for a walk through the zoo, "let's go home and see papa." "Oh, no," protested Elsie; "let's see these other monkeys first."—Philadelphia Press.

Butterflies. Mountain climbers frequently find butterflies frozen on the snow and so brittle that they break unless carefully handled. When thawed the butterflies sometimes recover and fly away.

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