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Why I Remain a Bachelor.

(Continued from page 1.)

we laid to rest the man who had died in the hotel; his name was Leon DeVault.

Lydia knew all of her father's affairs, and quickly summoning her lawyer, she laid her plans before him. I learned that she was an heiress, and as rich as myself. As her father had charged me to take care of his child, and had left no guardian in his will, it now became my duty to look after Lydia DeVault.

She was a child in her ways and soon came to me for advice as if I had been her father.

One day I became alarmed on seeing how much whiter her face had grown, and her poor little frame had wasted away until she was a mere skeleton of her former self.

Each day she visited the lonely little cemetery where lay a new mound of clay, and I saw that the young girl was grieving too much.

So I planned a long trip across the ocean, and sent Lydia away with her faithful maid.

She visited her old home, England, and as I received a letter now and then from her, I thought she would regain her youthful bloom and come back to America her old self.

And, as the long weeks went slowly by, I began to think a great deal of a sweet, pale face with large, wistful, brown eyes, and a high white forehead encircled with a mass of rich brown curls. Lydia was no longer a child to me! Seeing how matters were beginning to look, I endeavored to break myself of thinking of her. I tried to persuade myself that it was only fancy, but each day as my longing to see her increased, I became disgusted with myself. A man of thirty years thinking of love? No! She must never know. And putting on a brave air, I determined that she should never even guess!

At last came a letter saying Lydia would be home in June.

'Twas then she came. When all the roses were blooming, and the woods rang with the sweet, thrilling songs of birds and laughter of the rippling brook.

But she wore no roses upon her cheeks, in their place was a lily whiteness, and her laughing eyes, although bright, were not as I had expected to see them. Sadder, but more beautiful than when she went away. Thus came Lydia back to me.

Months passed, and my dream of seeing her a blooming, happy girl once more, became fainter and fainter as the roses grew scarce, and the summer days swept by.

I began to think she was in love and one day when a handsome young fellow came to ask me for her hand, of course I thought I had been correct.

Thinking to make her happy, I gave my consent for him to try to win Lydia, who had now grown dearer to me than life!

Imagine my surprise when she refused him twice, and then begged me to send him away.

One day I took her for a drive along the country road and she began telling me of her trip across the sea. She was so frank and child-like in her ways and talk!

"Did you not get lonely, Lydia, when you were among so many strange places?"

"Little Strokes Fell Great Oaks."

The giants of the forest must yield at last to the continual blows of the woodsmen. When the human blood has become clogged and impure the little drops of Hood's Sarsaparilla, properly taken, will fell the oak of bad blood.

Hood's Sarsaparilla
Never Disappoints

"Oh, yes! Doctor Kent, and I so often thought of home and you." I gave a start. Did she say she had thought of me?

For a time we drove swiftly along in silence, then I could not restrain my will any longer, so I told my child sweetheart of my love for her.

"I think I have always loved you, Lydia, and I can not help but tell you. Forgive me if I have done wrong in telling you."

Taking the thin, little hand I kissed it once.

Her eyes were hidden by their long, soft lashes, but a faint tint of pink crept over her white cheeks and forehead, and she spoke not a word.

Finally she raised her dark eyes to my own and said in a whisper, as if afraid someone else might hear: "You—I have nothing to forgive, because I love you too!"

She laid her head shyly upon my shoulder and burst into tears.

I think there was never a happier man on earth than I was at that moment! Raising her hands, I kissed them both again, and stole another kiss from her sweet lips.

The next day I was so busy with my patients that I did not see Lydia until evening, when I met her coming from her father's grave.

So pale did she look that I grew alarmed, but she assured me that she was all right, and so happy, now. In the soft, lingering twilight I bade her a tender good-night at her doorsteps, and went home to spend the night in happy thought.

When I bade my darling good-night on that evening, it was a last farewell, for I never saw her sweet face lighted up by smiles again.

A thunder storm came up the next evening. Just such a storm as had raged on that night when Leon DeVault had died!

Going to Lydia's home I was surprised and greatly alarmed on learning that she was not at home, and no one among the servants knew where she was.

Fearing something, I knew not what, I immediately made my way to the cemetery.

There upon her father's grave I found my darling, Lydia, and she was—dead!

The slight form was drenched with the rain, and the locks of curly brown fell in wet masses around her sweet, white face, but upon the cold, lifeless lips there hung a gentle smile.

We buried Lydia DeVault in the quiet cemetery by her father's side, and, then it was that all the sunshine, the joy of my life died! My heart was buried with my beautiful young lover in the cold, narrow bed, and as I sit beside that little mound of clay, which is now grown green with grass and flowers, and pen these sad lines, one can readily guess why I remain a gray-haired bachelor.

WHILE RIDING A HORSE

John L. Huggard, of Marshall, Tex.,
Had His Right Leg Broken.

Mr. John Huggard, formerly of this city but now a prominent mechanic of Marshall, Texas, had his right leg broken above the ankle while riding a spirited horse.

The manner and cause seems to be that John was on Christmas day riding up Main street of Marshall, when a youngster threw a lighted firecracker at the horse, the same exploding just as it fell underneath the horse. At this the animal gave a leap, unexpected to John. The consequence was that he was thrown heavily to the ground thus sustaining the injury as above stated.

He was attended by a physician who assured him that he would be all right in a short time. His many friends will rejoice to learn that the injury will not be permanent.

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One and All
we wish a
Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year.

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WM. BURKE,

Real Estate Agent.

I have farm lands in every section of this county at reasonable prices. Also city property on sale at payments of \$1.00 up. My facilities for handling rental property are unexcelled. Any property intrusted to my care will receive the closest possible attention and the very best results.

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