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SILENCE.

BY MARTHA McCULLOCH WILLIAMS.

No one was surprised when things happened to Silence—she began making history at three hours old. Grandmother Macklin laid her then, a pink, wrinkled morsel, within her father's arms, saying: "There, James Arbuthnot, what shall we name the blessing?"

"For the thing I most covet, and least enjoy—Silence," Judge Arbuthnot said, with a bow. He was bluff and ruddy—somewhat a gentleman of the old school, with a trifle choleric, in spite of a big, tender heart. He had astonished himself and his world by marrying at forty odd. Upon second thought it was not so astonishing, for his bride was Martha Macklin, who might have been an heiress, if only Judge Arbuthnot could have brought himself to set aside her grandfather's will, which cut her off with five hundred dollars and gave as many thousands to charity. But the judge knew beyond peradventure that old Hugh Macklin had been of sound and disposing mind when he made that testament—knew, too, it was not drawn in anger, but to keep faith with himself.

"Marry the woman you have chosen, and you are no more son of mine," he had said twenty years back to young Hugh, who had courted the daughter of his father's deadly enemy. Young Hugh was a Macklin. The threat of disinheritance made him marry Martha Waxworth out of hand. He did not live to repent it. Six months afterward he was drowned while rescuing some children who had ventured upon rotten ice. He was buried beside his mother, as became one of his name and everybody looked to see his child made heir in his stead.

So it might have been, only, as Squire Macklin said: "That Waxworth woman had not the sense to bear a son." He had been feverishly anxious about his coming grandchild—now he said no more about it; though, punctually upon each New Year's morning, he sent the widow a hundred dollars, marked only: "For the maintenance of your child."

Naturally she made much of that, and talked right and left of "little Marthy's fortune." For she talked of everything everywhere and all the time, and though her speech had no flavor of envy, malice or uncharitableness, it is more than a question if the most accomplished tattler could by any means have compassed the mischief she often brought to pass.

Certainly she talked Martha, her daughter, out of all chance of a decent legacy. Old Hugh heard resentfully of her garrulous vanity. So he shut his sole descendant out of his estate, as he had before shut her out of his heart and life.

Events have somewhat the cyclone's habit of moving in parallel courses. Before Silence was a year old, her grandmother, who was barely five and forty, had married a rich corporation lawyer. He had come to plead in a railway case before Judge Arbuthnot. To his next friends, the judge explained, with twinkling eyes: "You see, Marchmont had suffered tortures with insomnia, and the very first time he dined with us, Mrs. Macklin talked him asleep in fifteen minutes. Of course he could not let slip so valuable a remedy." But nobody remembered that much longer than the next Christmas, when the new Mrs. Marchmont sent gifts to all in the Sunday School, to say nothing of a hundred dollars to the Missionary Society, and Heaven knows what to her daughter and Silence.

Silence, it was noised about, the Marchmonts meant to adopt—now that the judge

and Martha were so wrapped up in their blue-eyed baby boy. The little girl, indeed, had never looked to belong to them—she was so slim and dark, with lustrous black eyes a world too big for her uncanny, small face. She was clearly an alien, with no trace of Arbuthnot favor, and precious little Macklin, except the look of old Hugh when she flew into a passion. She would be a handful for whoever would try to control her—so much was certain, mere baby though she was.

There was color of truth for the gossip, but somehow the adoption came to naught. Silence pined and fretted for "Dear Daddy" until those in authority were forced to bring her back.

"So you could not make my little Chippewa forget me?" Judge Arbuthnot said, when she sprang to his arms; then, his voice breaking a little as his fingers threaded the black hair, straight and silken: "She shows mighty bad taste, Marchmont; it's—it's dreadfully disappointing—and all that—but, to tell you the truth, I must have come for her to-morrow—if you had not brought her home."

Mrs. Arbuthnot kissed her recovered child, but wiped regretful tears from her eyes. By this, Silence was five years old; and there were twin babies in the nursery, both girls, beside the two boys between. With five children, and only a moderate fortune to divide among them, it looked a little hard to her motherly providence that the eldest of them should refuse to become an heiress. All along she had felt that thus Fate was to make up to her for the toppling down of her youth's golden air-castles. She had come to comprehend how her mother's indiscreet speech had wrought for their overturning; it seemed only right that in this wise, also through her mother, riches should come.

"I hope she will not regret it, our letting her have her own way, when she comes to understand it all," she said at last.

Judge Arbuthnot hugged Silence tighter to his breast. "Little Chippewa," he said, laying his cheek against her soft hair, "tell us why you would not stay and be Papa Marchmont's baby."

Silence sat up very straight, put her hands palm to palm, and answered promptly: "Cause when I was bad—so bad I screamed out loud—Papa Marchmont frowned, frowned, and Grandma Marchmont talked, talked—and nobody made me be good—and I kept bad till I was so tired—and then I wanted my Daddy."

"I thought so," the judge said, nodding and laughing. His wife smiled, too; but in her heart of hearts she sighed.

If, in the main, Time ambled with Silence till he brought her to twenty, there were spaces when he trotted eventually hard. At ten she set her world agog by checking a mad dog in full career. The creature rushed, snapping and snarling, into the thick of the schoolchildren, and she alone thought to muffle him in the big plaid shawl upon which she rode to school each morning, sitting behind her father and chattering like a bird. She was just turned twelve when, as they rode homeward, the judge had his stroke. It left him inert and helpless, yet in some fashion the girl held him fast in the saddle, and so brought him to the timely succor that meant final recovery. The Arbuthnot place, Highwood, lay some miles out of town. In six months the master of it was riding back and forth, as had been his habit a good forty years.

He was an old man now, with silver hair above his ruddy face. His wife was more like an elder child than anything else. Indeed, he depended far more upon Silence—Silence, who had broken an arm in one of her gallops, and ridden on to the doctor's before coming home; who had driven a pair of runaways till they stopped from sheer exhaustion; and refused openly to kiss a great local lady because she saw the paint on her face.

Exploits such as these left their mark, of course; but nothing to compare with what came later. For, by time she was eighteen, Silence had said "No!" plumply and promptly to the young rector, who was as rich and well-born as he was pious and good to look at, and who might have had, for the asking, young women ever so much more elegant. The parish, in fact, divided over that event—the one half holding that the rector had been miraculously saved from his own desire; the other that Silence had been guilty of little less than sacrilege.

"No, I don't think I care about it; I am not fond of church work, nor—nor of you!" she had said, with honest, uplifted eyes, in answering the momentous question. What she did care for, after her father and the rest, was the open world in shine or shadow; next to that, the books in the library, and the dumb creatures over whom she held empire.

So it was really not so astonishing that

she began to write stories which found a ready hearing. They made a fine "howdy-do" in the county; for, though they were pure figments of imagination, every page of them so dripped local color as to be misread for a transcript of fact or experience. That there was precious little love in them but strengthened the mistake. That was Silence all over. She would not have present lovers; and since, in the popular mind, a young woman's heart, like the moon, has always a man in it, her critics gave it out as exact fact that she was in love with an absent one, who could be none other than Marchmont Bellry.

He was the Marchmont heir and namesake—son to Mr. Marchmont's late partner, and himself now the active head of the firm. Mrs. Marchmont had been dead for years, but her husband kept still in touch with her daughter and grandchildren. Yet he had never quite forgiven Silence, nor Judge Arbuthnot for abetting her willfulness. He was careful to make them understand, each and several, that beyond some personal mementoes they had nothing to expect from him.

Birthdays were great things at Highwood. Silence's fell upon the 3rd of July. As she ran downstairs about sunrise the day she came to twenty, Jamie and Hugh, her brothers, standing either side the door which gave upon the piazza, began pelting her with stemless pale-pink roses and whistling "Hail Columbia."

"You're always so inconsiderate, Silence!" Hugh began, with a deeply injured air. "Why didn't you wait and be born to-morrow?—then we would have no trouble with celebrating; besides, you would have been a sort of national event."

"Oh, I think she was awfully considerate!" Jamie broke in, his blue eyes dancing. "You see, she didn't want to put those old-fogy signers of the Declaration clean out of court. Fancy the almanacs of the future running: 'Upon this day was born the very great author, Silence Arbuthnot So-and-so; also American independence was declared.' Now, you see, that's impossible."

"What a pity little boys will be so envious of their grown-up sisters! I wonder what makes them so naughty?" Silence said, tiptoeing to pat Jamie's head.

He was six feet two, with a silky yellow mustache, as became his nineteen years. Hugh was as tall, though he lacked some months of eighteen. The two locked hands into a pack-saddle, Silence mounted it, flung an arm about the shoulder of each, and was borne in triumph to the garden, where Rose and Bess, the twins, were clipping flowers for dear life.

"Oh, Silence! can't you put these in a story?" Bess said, holding up her wicker basket heaped with dewy bloom.

Jamie caught it and set it upon her bare head, saying, in exact imitation of her tone: "No, Silence; but you can make a story about the lazy little girl that love to sleep till eight o'clock, yet got up at daybreak on her sister's birthday, and worked like a clever fellow in hope of getting Silence to buy her a new white frock. I tell you, as Grandpapa Marchmont says, it tries one's faith in human disinterestedness to be known as a person of independent income."

Silence laughed merrily. "Poor grandpapa!" she said; "I wish he was here to-day. He must like Canada, though—we have not heard a word since he went there, six weeks ago."

"Suppose he had come on the train? I heard it stop ten minutes back, and that means passengers sure," Hugh said. "If he had, he would be getting here right now. As I live, there is somebody—why, it's Marchmont Bellry!"

The garden lay broadside to the lawn, at whose hither verge ran the big road which crossed the railway half a mile off. A slender man, flaxen, with steel-blue eyes, alert and springy, came lightly across the grass and gravel. He shook hands with all the group, Silence last. As his hand fell over hers a sort of hardness touched his lip.

"Let me see Judge Arbuthnot—at once, please," he said; "it is important—and I must catch the other train, which they tell me is due in an hour."

He caught it, in spite of hospitable protest. Perhaps he had truly the urgent business he plead, or perhaps he thought it best to let the Arbuthnots catch breath over his astounding news. Grandpapa Marchmont was dead and buried. The end had come suddenly in the night; but before it he had forbidden that they should hear of it except through his supposed heir. That was news, but greater news came after. Silence was the heir. No will could be found anywhere save the one executed fifteen years before. It gave her the whole fortune beyond a few trifling legacies, and named the elder Bellry guardian, with succession to his executors, of whom his son was chief.

"Silence, you are a child of fate! No

other conclusion is possible. Hurrah! I'm so glad! I always said you were a pretty decent old girl!" Jamie shouted, catching her and whirling her about.

She drew away from him and put her face in her hands.

"There must be a later will! Oh, I can't touch anything!" she said. "I won't—that is, anything except grandpapa's roses; she always said they were to be mine, and her tea-caddy, and the sandalwood box that stood on the library table."

"Oh, you'll find heap more things you'll want, when you think a little longer," Hugh said, encouragingly.

Judge Arbuthnot took his daughter's hand.

"I'm afraid you will have to take the money, little Chip," he said. "Bellry says he has searched every place; and when I hinted at division, he stiffened and let me know he was not quite a pauper. It is certain he will not divide with you; but I don't know what he would say to sharing."

There was significant inquiry in the last words. Silence flashed a lovely red, but said, severely:

"Daddy, you are naughty—as naughty as can be. You know Mr. Bellry would not look at an Indian savage such as me. He hates thin, dark women. In fact, I believe his ideal is like the Arab's—'A load for a camel.' If Bess, now, had not lost her baby plumpness, I should have been scheming this ever so long to have her keep him in the family."

"Why, Silence! you know he courted you last Christmas. I heard him my own self, there in the library, only mamma said I must not tell," Bess burst out, her eyes round and shining with excitement.

Silence blushed again—this time a vexed, painful red. But she said, stoutly: "I reckon you dreamed that, Betsy. Your head is so full of romance, you—"

"There wasn't any romance in that," Bess broke in, half shrugging her shoulders. "I can tell you every word he said. I was sitting with my book in the bay window when you two came in; and he just walked up and kicked the fire like he was mad with the black log, and then wheeled around and asked you if you would have him, just as he might have asked if you would have wine at dinner; and you said 'Thank you, no!' and he kicked the fire again and said, 'I think that a very foolish answer.'"

"I fear, Silence, you can neither explain nor argue away that evidence—it is too direct and circumstantial," Judge Arbuthnot said, with twinkling eyes; then joined in the general laugh.

Silence ran away from it, but held her head high, and flung a gay retort over her shoulder as she vanished up the stair.

Once her door was safely locked she paced her chamber with quick, uneven steps. All the fateful Christmas Day rose clear in memory. She had driven to the station for the two guests, and as she walked between them to the waiting carriage, she had heard one loungeer say, sibilantly, to his elbow neighbor: "So that's the fellow Silence has been lovin' so long! He ain't so pretty she need to turn her back on the rest for him!"

"Lord! But look at the money he'll have—that'd make the wimmen think er cross-eyed humpback was a cherrybim!" the neighbor had returned, in the same key, and Grandfather Marchmont had looked at her, chuckling significantly. Of course she was not in love with Marchmont Bellry—she was not given to love anyone unsought—but after that, she must have refused him if her heart had broken for it, particularly when he spoke in such cool, business fashion. He could care nothing for her—it was all to please the old man. He had somehow grown to love his wife's memory more than ever he had loved herself, and yearned to have his fortune pass to her blood, though her pride forbade the gift of it outright.

Perhaps Bellry had been glad of her refusal—perhaps, even in gratitude for it, he had hidden or destroyed the later will. If that were the case, if she found even a color of probability for the suspicion, she would not touch the money—nothing should put her in the attitude of beneficiary to him. But to do that meant strife and heart-burning untold. Things had not gone over well at Highwood for the last year or two. There had been losses of money, to say nothing of Judge Arbuthnot's retirement. Even now, Silence knew her mother was sending up thanksgiving over this golden tide of affairs. How was she ever to be prevailed with not to take it at the flood?

She came in full of tender, triumphant trembling, just as Silence had begun an imperative note to Bellry.

"Don't—don't send for him, dear!" she plead, reading the address as she bent over her daughter to lay fond arms about

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Personal letters to Professor Munyon, 11 and 13 Albert St., Toronto, answered with free medical advice for any disease.

Reading Notes.

Christmas isn't very far away, but it seems nearer to some of our young men nearing bachelorhood, than it does to others, for they are aware that Leap-year does not come again for some time, and the time is growing short for them to realize their anticipations at the beginning of the year.

The market man from our neighboring town has not been seen around lately, he must have found our Reading girls slow. Be a little more spry, Maud.

The fellow with the auburn hair has returned, but instead of giving us a call, he has gone farther West. Keep up your courage, Bessie, a bad penny always returns. He no doubt thinks you are very comfortable for the winter with the widower.

Some of our fair ones spent a very pleasant evening at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Smith Murray's, of Charlestown, Mass.

One of our Reading young men is getting to be quite an expert on the Bicycle. He ran into a butcher cart.

Our Boston merchant received a fine shipment of fowl before Thanksgiving, of which he disposed of at short notice. He is now looking for larger game.

It is rumored that two of our fair ones are seized with the desire of going on the stage and that they are taking afternoon lessons in order that their first performance may be a success.

Although Reading has lately completed its electric plant which makes the town light as day, we hear of a young man who either intentionally or by accident made his way into a basement, and while there found it so comfortable or the company so agreeable, that he did not find time to call on the rest of his friends.

Keep the light lit in the hall, Lena, it is hard to tell the right bell in the dark.

Joe did not take the advice given in the last Reading notes, and some of the girls are feeling disappointed.

CONSTANT READER.

A CASE OF DIABETES.

No Help From Medical Men—Suffered for Many Years—Cured by Dodd's Kidney Pills.

North Bruce, Dec. 21 (Special)—An old and well known settler in this Township, named Thomas Brooks, who lives on lots 7 and 8 in the 14th concession is rejoicing with his neighbors over his recent recovery, and he said—

"I was cured by using twenty-four boxes of Dodd's Kidney Pills and as nothing else ever helped me I say they saved my life."

"I had tried all the doctors of this locality and was treated for diabetes hoping and suffering for years.

From reading of cures I determined to use Dodd's Kidney Pills and I must say that after using the first box I would have considered them reasonable at ten dollars a box.

FROM MR. CASTELL HOPKINS'

Life and Reign of Queen Victoria.

Published by the Bradley-Carleton Co. Toronto and Brantford Ont.

A CHARACTERISTIC LETTER.

Windsor Castle, Oct. 15, 1839

"My Dearest Uncle,—This letter will I am sure, give you pleasure, for you have always shown and taken so warm an interest in all that concerns me. My mind is quite made up, and I told Albert this morning of it. The warm affection he showed me gave me much pleasure. He seems perfection, and I think I have the prospect of very great happiness before me. I love him more than I can say, and shall do everything in my power to render this sacrifice (for such in my opinion it is) as small as I can. He seems to have great tact, a very necessary thing in his position. These last few days have passed like a dream to me, and I am so much bewildered by it all that I know hardly how to write; but I do feel very happy.

"Lord Melbourne has acted in this business, as he has always done toward me, with the greatest kindness and affection. We also think it better and Albert quite approves of it, that we should be married very soon after parliament meets, about the beginning of February.

"Pray, dearest uncle, forward these two letters to uncle Ernest (of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha), to whom I beg you will enjoin strict secrecy, and explain these details, which I have no time to do, and to faithful Stockmar. I think you might tell Louise of it, but none of her family.

"I wish to keep the dear young gentleman here till the end of next month. Ernest's sincere pleasure gives me great delight. He does so adore dearest Albert.

"Ever dearest uncle, your devoted niece,

V. R."

Statement Confirmed

By a Justice of the Peace.

ANOTHER VICTORY IN NOVA SCOTIA.

PAINE'S CELERY COMPOUND DOES THE GOOD WORK AFTER OTHER MEDICINES FAIL

The majority of people cured by Paine's Celery Compound feel compelled to make public statements with a view of benefiting other sufferers. Cured people gratefully contribute important testimony in order that the sick and afflicted may cease spending money for worthless preparations that can never effect a cure. Truthful letters coming from reliable people, who testify to the worth of Paine's Celery Compound, have a mighty influence for good, and are fully appreciated by thinking men and women.

Mr. Jas. Cossaboom, Jr., of Tiverton, N. S., says:

"It gives me pleasure to add my testimony to the value of Paine's Celery Compound. For some years past I have suffered from stomach troubles, also pains in the head. I tried many medicines that were recommended to me, but never received any benefit from them. At last I was advised to use Paine's Celery Compound, and before I had finished the first bottle I experienced a happy change. I continued using Paine's Celery Compound till I had taken five bottles, which made a perfect cure.

"I can heartily recommend the use of Paine's Celery Compound to any one suffering from the same troubles. You have my best wishes for the future success of your excellent medicine."

Mr. Allen Outh-Use, Justice of the Peace, says: "I can certify that the above statement is true in every particular."

The Canadian Home Journal for December, published in Toronto, edited by the well-known writer, Faith Fenton, late of The Empire, has just reached us. It is artistically gotten up, full of the Xmas spirit, well illustrated, and in every way justly lays claim to be the leading ladies' paper of Canada. Lady Aberdeen, herself, President of the National Council of Women, edits and controls the department devoted to the interests of this influential organization. Music, Art, Fashions, Games, The Household, fascinating and sensible stories written specially for the Journal, bright, timely articles on books, people and current events are among its leading features, and commend it to every woman in the Dominion. Single copies 10 cents, or \$1.00 a year. Address, Home Journal Publishing Co., Globe Building, Toronto.

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Signature of Dr. H. H. H. H.

(Continued on page 5)