

✱ A DAUGHTER OF JUDAS. ✱

By the Author of "Sir Lionel's Wife," "The Great Moreland Tragedy," Etc.

CONTINUED.
CHAPTER XVIII.
AN ADVENTURE.

Marie Muggleton, probably incited there to by Mr. Tipcraft, took a great interest in matters connected with his parish; and, as she was really a very generous and warm-hearted girl, she soon found a pleasure in visiting among the poor, and ministering from her father's wealth, to their necessities.

The very day after the arrival of Sir Patrick at Vivian Court, she ordered the pony carriage, and having seen it was well stored with good things from the housekeeper's room and the butler's pantry, she prepared to set out on one of her charitable expeditions.

"Will you go with me, Janet?" she asked.

But Janet was expecting a visit from Sir Granville Grattley, and murmured some excuse.

As for Vi, she was swinging in a hammock in the garden, deep in a novel.

Marie knew she wouldn't want to be disturbed.

Accordingly, she set out alone, dispensing even with the attendance of a groom, although the little ponies were occasionally restive, and needed a firm hand behind them.

Marie, however, prided herself on her skill with the "ribbons," and was rather fond of displaying it.

All went well until she had made her round of calls, and was returning home; then misfortune befell her.

She was driving through a lane, when a hare started up from among some ferns, and scudded across the road, right under the ponies' feet.

The fiery little animals were startled. They tossed up their heads, and, with a sudden wrench, one of them got the bit between its teeth.

Off they flew at lightning speed, whirling the light phaeton behind them, as though it had been a toy.

Marie was frightened—thoroughly frightened.

Still, she did not lose her nerve.

She sat quite calm and quiet, though very pale, and held on to the reins like grim death.

Of what availed her little strength, however, to check the mad pace of those two fiery brutes?

Closing her eyes, she tried to murmur a prayer, thinking philosophically—

"If they're going to kill me, I hope they'll kill me outright. I hope I shan't have to suffer much."

Miss Muggleton was, however, not destined to be killed at all on this occasion, for just as she had thus nerved herself to meet her fate, something sprang out from the shadow of the hedge upon the ponies.

A grip of iron had them in its grasp, and in a moment they were brought to a full stop, bathed in perspiration, trembling, and, it is so to be hoped, heartily ashamed of their mad escapade.

Poor Marie opened her eyes to look at her deliverer, and saw a man of middle age unmistakably a gentleman, and of a military carriage.

That was all she saw at the first glance, but when the stranger came to the side of the phaeton, and, in a rich, mellow voice, with a touch of Irish brogue about it, very earnestly expressed a hope that she was not hurt, she was able to further note that his face, if not exactly the handsomest, was one of the pleasantest she had ever seen.

The carriage of his head was splendidly soldierly; his teeth were white and sound; his eyes were brightly blue and of a rollicking humor; and, to crown all, the whole face was lighted up by an expression as frank, so happy, so delightfully good-humoured that it would have served to redeem from ugliness the homeliest features beneath the sun.

"I do most sincerely hope ye are not hurt," he said, and that mellow voice, with its intonation of earnestness, sounded wonderfully pleasant in Marie's ears.

"No, I am not hurt at all—only, I was very frightened. Oh, thank you, thank you so much!" she uttered, fervently.

"If it hadn't been for you I should have been killed. I am sure I should."

She was very pale, and her voice sounded tremulous for all its fervency of gratitude.

"I'm afraid you are a bit faint," said Sir Patrick, anxiously; and even as he said it, the young lady's head drooped forward on her bosom, and she quietly fainted away.

The tension on her nerves had been too great; and now that deliverance had come outraged nature exacted the penalty of her former calmness.

Sir Patrick felt himself in a dilemma.

No man had ever had less to do with women than he; and although the gentlest and most tender-hearted of mortals, he did not in the least know how to proceed.

The first thing he did was to tether the now repentant ponies to a gate-post, to prevent their taking it into their wicked little heads to run away again.

This done, he lifted the unconscious girl out of the phaeton, and bore her to a little spring, which gurgled merrily down some moss-covered stones a dozen yards away.

Taking off her hat, he laved her brow with a very liberal supply of the cold spring water; and finding this did not suffice, he did not suffice, he whipped out of his pocket his whisky-flask, and poured down her throat as much of the raw, fiery spirit as he could conveniently get there.

He had seen this same treatment meet with success in the case of men who had been thrown in the hunting-field; and he

was in hopes it might be equally efficacious now.

Poor, blundering, Irish-mannered, tender-hearted Sir Patrick!

Efficacious his treatment certainly was. Marie, all unused to such fiery draughts, struggled and choked, and altogether showed signs of returning consciousness.

She opened her eyes, to find herself lying in her deliverer's arms.

"Be easy, me darlin'," he said, tenderly, just as he would have spoken to a child. "Ye'll be all right in a minute or two—the good angels be praised."

Marie distinctly heard that involuntary term of endearment, but as far from being alarmed or offended at it, it actually sounded pleasantly in her ears, so great is the charm to woman's heart, of a mellow voice and a fine eye.

Sir Patrick upon his part, was conscious of feeling a curious thrill in all his veins, as he looked down at the pale face so near his own.

The chivalrous tenderness of his nature made him delighted to protect the weak and helpless, and hence, perhaps, that soft thrill at his heart.

Marie was a good looking girl, not beautiful, perhaps, but her good looks were of that healthy, wholesome, pleasant type which particularly appeals to such men as our honest Sir Patrick.

A fresh, blooming complexion, white teeth bright, good-humoured eyes reddish brown hair, and a plump, shapely figure—these were Marie's charms, and such charms, it must be admitted, are by no means to be despised.

As soon as she could find strength, she struggled into a sitting posture, and tried to thank Sir Patrick for his kindness.

Her paleness only rendered her the more interesting, and as her eyes softened with grateful feeling, it is no wonder he thought her face very pleasant and comely to look upon.

His too liberal application of water had wetted her pretty bodice and dark-blue jacket; her hat, too, had been crushed almost out of shape.

But she took these accidents so good-humouredly, and repeated her thanks with such sweetness that Sir Patrick, who had laboured under a little trepidation on these points, secretly called her an ornament to her sex.

If only Sir Gerald could have come into the lane at that moment, he would have thought his wishes for his friend were on the high road to accomplishment.

As soon as Marie seemed able to stand, Sir Patrick led her back to the phaeton, and, with a courteous word of apology, took his seat beside her.

"I must drive you—that is, if you will allow me," he said. "You are not strong enough to hold the reins. Besides, I shouldn't like to trust you with those mischievous little brutes again."

"You are too kind," said Marie, earnestly, stealing another grateful glance at him. "Not at all. It is a great pleasure, said the gallant Irishman. 'Where shall I drive, if you please?'"

"Oh, to The Towers, just beyond Little Cleeve. I might have told you my name, mightn't I? I am Miss Muggleton."

And Marie flushed a little, as she wondered how the plebeian name would sound in the ears of this high-bred Irish gentleman.

It certainly seemed to have a very decided effect upon him.

He, too, changed color, and an old look crept into his eyes.

In a moment, however, he was himself again, and said, frankly—

"And I am staying with your neighbour, Sir Gerald Vere. Sir Patrick Donovan, Miss Muggleton"—and he bowed low—"at your service."

After this, they drove on together in perfect amity, chatting and laughing quite like old friends.

Sir Patrick, just to cheer her spirits, and prevent her from turning faint again, told her his choicest Irish jokes, in his most irresistible Irish manner, and her pleasant laugh rang out again and again on the quiet country air.

By the time The Towers was reached, she had quite come to the conclusion that he was the most fascinating man she had seen in all her life, and her heart had leaped with an unaccountable feeling of joy, when a chance remark of his assured her he was unmarried.

If only Sir Patrick would have played the cards Fate dealt out to him, how happy he might have been. Yes, and how happy he might have made Marie Muggleton!

CHAPTER XIX.

THE RECTOR FINDS A RIVAL.

Great was the chagrin of the rector of Little Cleeve to find, on the occasion of his next visit to The Tower, a soldier-like sun-crowned Irishman domiciled in Mrs. Muggleton's drawing-room, with every appearance of having come to stay.

A closer observation convinced him that he had some slight knowledge of the intruder.

He had met him once or twice at the house of his noble uncle in Ireland; but this discovery by no means tended to restore the reverend gentleman's equanimity, for he knew Sir Patrick was a bachelor, and judging others by himself, he never doubted for a moment that the high-born but impecunious Irishman intended to build up the fortunes of his house with Marie Muggleton's money.

Certainly, Marie's own manner afforded him no relief.

She seemed to take pleasure in keeping Sir Patrick beside her; her eye, as it rested on his sun-browned face, held its softest light, and her voice, when it addressed him seemed insensibly to modulate itself into that sweet gentleness of tone which a woman uses to a man she loves, or whose love she would fain win.

As a matter of fact this was the state of mind Miss Muggleton.

The Irish, as a race, are quick to inspire love as well to feel it; and although Marie had seen Sir Patrick only three times in all, and three days ago he had been an utter stranger to her she liked him better than any man she had ever met before.

Of course, Sir Gerald, on hearing of the plan on adventure, had insisted on taking his friend to The Towers the next day, in order to make due inquiries concerning the health of Miss Marie.

The young lady had greeted her deliverer with a mingling of shyness and sweetness which had been altogether captivating. Her father and mother had been loud, but not more loud than earnest, in their thanks and he had enjoyed himself so well with these new friends, that when Mrs. Muggleton begged him to make one at her tennis party two days hence, he could not find the heart to say her nay.

It was the day of the tennis party when Mr. Tipcraft entered the Muggleton drawing room, and found, to his horror a rival there.

A downpour of rain had put an end to the tennis, and all the visitors had returned home save three gentlemen—John Morewood, Sir Gerald, and Sir Patrick Donovan.

Morewood was talking in low tones to Kate Lisle, a little apart from the rest; Sir Gerald devoted himself to Mrs. Muggleton and her two younger daughters; and at one of the windows stood Marie and Sir Patrick, she looking up into his face with a shy, almost reverential, admiration.

The rector of Little Cleeve took the alarm at once.

He had a species of shrewd cunning—especially where his own interests were concerned—which might very well pass for cleverness.

At any rate, he was clever enough to see that Marie Muggleton was perilously near being in love with this gay-voiced, blue-eyed Irishman.

She did not wear that shy, admiring look for nothing.

Assuredly, she had never worn it for the Reverend Augustus Tiptaft.

Presently, Mr. Muggleton came into the room.

Sir Gerald got into conversation with him about some farm-land, and the rector saw nothing for it but to devote himself to the three disengaged ladies.

All the time, though, he kept a jealous eye the couple at the window, and fumed inwardly at the ease of manner with which that impudent Irishman stood his ground.

Tea was brought in; and, after tea, the rain having cleared away, there was a general saunter through the grounds.

But, come what might, Sir Patrick kept his place by Marie's side.

That he was wooing her, Mr. Tiptaft could not doubt, but he told himself that never before had such bare-faced impudence been known by woeer, as was being shown by this ruined Irishman with the lame foot and the scarred brow.

The reverend gentleman's own role had been that of a tender humility.

He had sat beside his divinity while she worked, and had handed her her needles, or silks, or threads, as the case required.

He had willingly held out his hands for skeins of wool to be placed upon them for Miss Marie to wind.

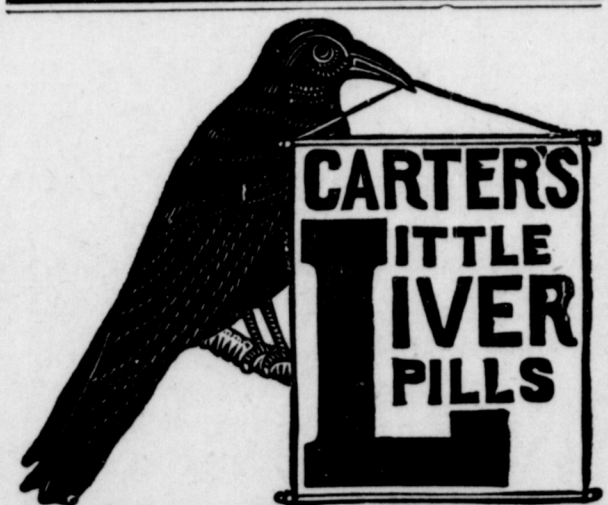
He had nursed her favourite kitten, carried her scarf, and, in short, been ready to do anything for her, all the while murmuring into her ear bland speeches about his own humility, his devotion to his duties, and his yearnings after a 'sympathy' which, hitherto, he had not met.

Very different was the bearing of Sir Patrick.

He nursed no kitten, and held no skein of wool.

There was no humility in his look—no insinuating softness in his tone.

He was simply a genial, hearty gentleman, with a ringing laugh, in which there was a sort of infectious gaiety.



SICK HEADACHE
Positively cured by these Little Pills.

They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Hearty Eating. A perfect remedy for Dizziness, Nausea, Drowsiness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They Regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.

Small Pill. Small Dose. Small Price.

Substitution
the fraud of the day.

See you get Carter's,

Ask for Carter's,

Insist and demand
Carter's Little Liver Pills.

He never lost his manliness, never seemed, by his manner, to be imploring Miss Muggleton to tread on him.

And yet, oddly enough, Miss Muggleton seemed to like this wooing—if wooing it was; liked it as Desdemona liked the wooing of Othello, or Katharina that of Petruchio.

Certainly, Mr. Tiptaft had no chance of even winning an encouraging smile from her, while Sir Patrick Donovan was present.

Greatly disconcerted, and, it is to be feared, in a most unpriest-like frame of mind, the reverend gentleman presently departed, and betook himself to his snug rectory, where he fell into a train of deep and anxious musing.

He had not given up the game.

Indeed, the appearance of a rival only acted as a stimulus to further effort.

A wife with a million pounds was worth striving for.

The question was, what was to be done next?

How could he beat from the field that presumptuous Sir Patrick Donovan?

And while their everend gentleman was thus cudgelling his brains, Mr. Muggleton—the last of his guests having departed—was saying to his wife, in the privacy of her dressing-room—

"Jane, it strikes me Sir Patrick is rather sweet on our Polly."

The millionaire could not, at all times, remember that his daughters had changed their names with their fortunes.

Janetta was Jenny to him, and Marie was Polly, or even Poll, far oftener than his wife approved.

On this occasion, however, she did not rebuke him; she was too full of interest in the subject he had mentioned.

She was anxious to know his mind upon it, for, good-natured though he was in the main, he could put his foot down very firmly when he chose, and she would not have dared to make a match for her daughters without his approval.

"Yes, I think he is," she replied. "And I believe she likes him, too. What do you think of it, Samuel?"

"Why, I think that if all my girls could get a man as good, they'd have nothing to grumble at. That fine-mannered Sir Granville Grantley is all very well; I've nothing against him, but he ain't in my line. He thinks too much of himself, for one thing, and that's what I never like to see in any man."

"Still he seems to act fairly by Jennie and he asks me for her, he shall have her—and her fortune to boot. But that Sir Patrick now, he's a man of another stamp. My wife'll be a happy woman, you mark my words!"

Strange to say that honest Mr. Muggleton, who had known Sir Patrick only three days, should have the same opinion on this point as Sir Gerald.

"To be sure, he's only a baronet," said Mrs. Muggleton, reflectively. "When there's no money at all to put against ours. I think we've the right to ask for something really worth having in the way of a title."

The good lady secretly approved of Sir Patrick's suit; but, as her husband spoke so decidedly, she, of course, felt bound to hang back a little in the matter.

"Worth having! Why? good gracious! woman, the very name of Donovan is worth more than half the earldoms in England—poor mushroom things most of 'em, sprung up in a night, as it were!" cried the millionaire, with all the contempt which men of his class often feel for an aristocracy which is not of truly ancient growth.

"I know what not of Donovans are. Vere was telling me about 'em last night. And then, look at the man himself. What a difference to some of 'em you see! I tell you I should be proud to clasp him on the back, and call him son-in-law."

Mrs. Muggleton did not further contradict her spouse; she was well content to leave matters as they were.

"Donovan," said Sir Gerald, as they walked home together from The Towers that evening, "I congratulate you."

"Ye do? And what on, pray?"

Sir Patrick spoke carelessly, but a slight flash rose to his bronzed cheek.

"Oh, you know well enough. I can see you're quite smitten with the fair Marie; and a man with half-an-eye could see she's the same with you."

"My dear boy, do ye really think so?" asked Donovan, anxiously.

"Of course I do. The field is open before you. All you've got to do is to go in and win."

"If I really thought she cared!" said Sir Patrick; and again his voice sounded anxious, his cheek was still a little flushed, and there was a wistful questioning in his bright blue eyes.

"If you weren't the least conceited fellow under the sun, you'd be sure of it. Go in and win, I tell you. I'll back you up!" So said Sir Gerald in his hearty friendship, and so he meant; but the time was coming—ay, was close at hand!—when he would have little thought to spare from his own black misery.

The storm-cloud had gathered, and was ready to burst upon his head.

CHAPTER XX.

BY THE HOLLOW OAK.

In her own chamber stood Lilian Delisle, a note between her fingers, which she was reading and re-reading.

It was written in a firm, feminine hand, and ran thus—

"I must see you, and speak to you. The suspense is more than I can bear. Will you be at the Hollow Oak to-night—at seven if you can? If not, I shall wait until you come."

There was no signature to this brief note—nothing to say whence or from whom it came.

Lilian's countenance, as she read it, was pale, and her eyes held a look of anguish and terror.

"Why has she come?" she moaned. And she paced about the room, with hurried

ried footsteps, like one oppressed with a terrible dread of some impending evil.

She looked at the tiny gold watch at her belt.

It was half-past six, and already the shades of evening were beginning to fall.

The sky was dark and lowering, betokening rain; an ominous roll of thunder could be heard in the distance.

Nevertheless, Lilian donned a hat and cloak with quick, determined fingers, looking meanwhile, with a sort of wondering pity, at her own pale image in the glass—at her rigid lips and terror-haunted eyes.

"Why has she come?" she moaned, again. "Oh! why—why?"

Downstairs she went, and slipped out of the house by one of the library windows, unseen by anyone.

Lady Ruth was lying down in her room with a nervous headache; Sir Gerald had gone to Mrs. Muggleton's tennis-party with his friend.

Swiftly she passed down the avenue of elms, and across the park, to that plantation in which Morewood had seen the face of Madeline Winter.

In the middle of it stood the Hollow Oak—a great ruin of a tree, whose mighty trunk and gnarled, leafless branches alike spoke mournfully of decay.

In the trunk there was a fissure, which might have held three or four men in comfort.

Tradition said a murder had been done in that spot, and that the body of the victim had been hidden inside the tree.

Whether or not this ghastly tale were true, the village folk shunned the tree at nightfall.

A slight shiver shook Lilian Delisle at sight of it.

Her cheek turned a shade paler, her eye averted itself, almost as though with horror, from certain stains on the weather-beaten trunk, which the superstitious declared to be the murdered victim's blood.

Apparently, however, there was someone who did not share her aversion or her fears; for, from the awesome fissure, there stepped forth a woman, who had evidently chosen to shelter there from the rain which was now beginning to fall.

It was almost dark, but not so dark but that it might be seen that the woman was of a tall and stately make, and that she was pale of face, with jet black hair.

An inscrutable face it was, with something of mournfulness in the deep, dark eyes, and with power enthroned upon the pale, high brow.

Advancing with a swift, yet truly majestic step, she stretched forth her arms towards Lilian Delisle.

One single moment Lilian hesitated, then rushed into their shelter; and the two embraced fervently, in the shadow of the haunted oak.

Long and earnest was the conversation between those two; and often, as they talked in whispers, they glanced fearfully around, as though in dread of being overheard.

The older woman lingered when the moment of parting came.

It seemed as though she could not bring herself to give the farewell kiss, and let Lilian go.

"Oh, go, go!" urged Lilian. "Someone may come through the plantation. We may be seen. Think of the danger."

"The only person I fear is that man Morewood," said her companion, in a sombre tone.

Lilian shivered, as though an icy wind had blown upon her.

"Go! go!" she repeated. "It is dangerous for you to be with me here—dangerous for me to be away from the house at such a time. If I should be missed—if suspicion should once be aroused!"

She spoke in a low tone, but with the utmost vehemence; her eyes expressed a perfect agony of fear.

I will go then. Good-bye, my darling!"

And with a last passionate kiss, she turned away, and in a moment was lost to sight among the trees.

Lilian gathered her cloak more closely round her; and, with swift steps, quitted the plantation, crossed the lane, and entered the park.

Once there, she breathed a little more freely, but all the way to the house, in spite of the now fast-falling rain, she kept looking behind her at intervals to assure herself she was not watched.

Arrived at the house, she entered by the library window, stole quietly upstairs, and began to dress for dinner, with a stern settled composure strangely at variance with her demeanour in the plantation half-an-hour ago.

(CONTINUED ON FIFTEENTH PAGE.)

DYSPEPSIA.

"For over eleven years I suffered terribly with Dyspepsia and tried everything I could think of, but got no relief until I started using Burdock Blood Bitters. I had only taken one bottle when I commenced to feel better, and after taking five or six bottles was entirely well, and have been so ever since. I feel as if B.B.B. had saved my life." Mrs. T. G. JOYCE, Stanhope, Que.

B. B. B. cures Biliousness, Sick Headache, Sour Stomach, Dyspepsia, Constipation, Coated Tongue, Liver Complaint, Jaundice, Kidney Disease, and makes the blood rich, red and pure. It is a highly concentrated vegetable compound.

One teaspoonful is the dose for adults; 10 to