

POETRY.

WINTER.

A kindly host is winter host, With icy fingers warm of heart, Who nimbly, till at every pore We tingle with a grateful smart.

And welcome are the winter nights, And cat beside the hearth couch curled, And all the freshest darts delight, Oblivious to the outer world.

Where snow upon the meadow lies, And leafless branches shiver bare, And stars of blink their aching eyes, That look so long through frozen air.

Then hush, the white and still wall, If someone on life's life we brood, We seek some spirit-kindling tale To rouse us from this drowsy mood.

Or from the chest beside we take Some faded letters, long unread, And once more for the cherished sake Of eager winged hoards of fate.

We read them, seeming now to hear Mute voices ring in happy chime, Like leaves of autumn, staid and dear, They fill our hearts with summer time.

And if our eyes will faintly blur, We pore of eyes a merry pyre, And list the cat's contented purr, And homely gossip of the fire.

And still a pleasure without end It is, upon a winter's night, To sit in converse with a friend, Cleared by the flickering light.

Then welcome to the harsh discord Of halloones on the window pane, That sweeter music doth afford, Than scented darts of summer rain.

SELECT STORY.

BERYL BRENTANO

THE SAPPHIRE OF THE SOUTH.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was late in the afternoon of Saturday, Christmas Eve, when Leo knocked at the door of Mrs. Singleton's room. Her hopeful scheme had dissolved, vanished like a puff of steam on ice, leaving only a teasing memory of mocking failure. Judge Dent's conference with the district solicitor had convinced him of the futility of any attempt to secure bail; moreover, a message from the prisoner earnestly exhorted them to abandon all intercessory designs in her behalf, as she would not accept release on bail, and preferred to await her trial.

"Good evening, Miss Gordon. If you want to see her, Ned will show you the way to the chapel, where I left her awhile ago. Since her mother's death, the only comfort she gets is from the organ; so we let her go there very often. I would go with you, but I want to finish a black shawl I am crocheting for her."

The warden escorted his visitor through the chill dim corridors that had formerly so appalled Beryl's soul, and upon the steps both paused to listen. On the small cabinet organ, a skilful hand was playing a grand and solemn air. Waving the warden back, Leo softly entered the chapel, closed the door and sat down.

Through the narrow windows, the afternoon sunlight, fettered by shadowy bars, fell on the bare floor, and the radiant notes of the organ and the waning face of the musician, gilding the dark reddish-brown hair coiled loosely on her nobly poised head. Unmindful of the rays across which her fingers strayed, she was gazing off into space, as if seeking some friendly face, and to the same sombre, passionate, plaintive melody she sang: "The way is dark, my Father! Cloud upon cloud, and I am groping for a hand to lead me; and yet, I have no hope of expressing adequately the comfort I derived from this manifestation of your confidence. The warden, who had been so kind to me, above all, that you were willing to take me—an outcast, almost a convicted criminal—into the holy shelter of your own home, oh! you can never realize, unless you stand in my place, how it soothes my heart, how it will always make a bright spot in the blackness of my situation. The full sympathy of a noble woman is the best tonic for a feeble sufferer, who knows the world has turned its back upon her. If I were unworthy, your goodness would be the keenest lash that could scourge me; but forasmuch as I seem, your friendship brings me messenger of balm, and while I could never have accepted your generous offer, I thank you sincerely."

"Why were you so unwilling that I should try to release you?" "I have not a dollar to pay my expenses anywhere, and I appreciated too fully all that was involved in your hospitable offer, to take me under your roof, to be willing to avail myself of it. Here I am provided for by those who believe me guilty; and here I have the sympathy of Mr. and Mrs. Singleton, who were my first friends when the storm broke over my doomed head. To go out of prison into the world now would be torturing, because I am proud and sensitive; and these dark walls screen me from the curious observation from which I shrink, as from being flayed. Since there is no escape for me, I prefer to wait here for the end, which, after all, cannot be very distant."

"Do you refer to the trial next month?" "No, to that which awaits behind the trial; a shallow gash out there under the pines, where the sound of the penitentiary bell tolls requiems for the souls of its mangled victims."

"Hush! hush! You wrong yourself by imagining the possibility of such horrible results. It was the hope of clearing you that made me so anxious to get you away. If I could only take you home, even for one week!" "The wish has cheered me inexpressibly. How good, how noble, how tender you are! Mrs. Gordon, because I am so grateful, let me now say one thing. You cannot help me in future, and it would grieve me to think that I fell, as an unlighting shadow, between your heart and the sunshine that warms it. God bless you! God reward you! Do you think I could bear to know that I had caused even a hand's breath of cloud to drift over

the heavenly blue of your happy sky? The bow of promise that spans your life is no secret. Let me thought of me jar the harmony that reigns here because I came here. Leave me to my doom, which human hands cannot avert now; and be happy without questioning."

A deep flush had risen to Leo's temples, and withdrawing her hand, she shaded her face for a moment. The great bell below the tower clock rang suddenly. "Good-bye, Miss Gordon. I had permission to stay here only till the bell sounded. Pray for me, but do not come again. Visits to me could bring you nothing but sorrow in return for your compassion, and that would add to my misery. I wish you a pleasant Christmas, a happy New Year, and as cloudless a life as your great goodness deserves."

Once more their hands met in a long close clasp, then Leo laid on the chancel railing a large square envelope. "It is only a Christmas card, but so lovely, I know your artistic taste cannot fail to admire it; and it may brighten your cheerless room. It is the three-hundred-dollar prize card, and particularly beautiful."

"Thank you, dear Miss Gordon. It may help to deaden the merciless stings of memory, which all day long has tortured me by unrolling the past, where my Christmas days stand out like illuminated capitals on black letter pages."

Leo hastened to the door, when a passionate, indeliberately mournful cry arrested her steps. "Too late! too late! O, God! What a cruel mockery!"

Beryl stood leaning against the railing of the altar, with the light of the setting sun falling against the gilded card she held up in one hand, on her white convulsive face, where tears fell in a scalding flood. Retracing her steps, Leo said falteringly: "In my efforts to comfort you, have I only wounded more sorely? How have I hurt you? What can I do?"

"No! no! you are an angel of pity, hovering over an abyss of ruin, whose darkest horrors you only imagine faintly. What can you do? Nothing, but pray to God to paralyze my tongue, and grant me the power to forget my last clutch on faith, and curse my Creator, and drift down to eternal perdition! It was hard enough before, but this mockery maddens."

With a sudden abandonment, she hurled the card away, threw her arms around Leo's neck and sobbed unceasingly. Tenderly the latter held her shivering form, as the proud head fell on her shoulder; and after a time, Beryl lifted a face white as an annunciation lily, drenched by tropical rain.

"I thought my fortune had emptied all my joys, and that was nerved, because there was nothing more to dread. But the worst is always behind, and this is the irony of fate. That Christmas card is the solitary dove I sent out to hunt a resting-place for mother and me, when the angel of death, with his wings outstretched, came to take us to his abode. He came to take us to Boston, to compete for the prizes offered. How I dreamed, how I toiled! Haunting the flower shops for a glimpse of heartsease, and passion flowers, and stars of Bethlehem; passing a butcher at the abattoir to spare a lamb, until I had sketched it; kneeling by cradles in the public creche to get the full red curve of a baby's sucking lips, as they foretook the bottle, the dimple in the tiny hands, the tendril of hair on the satin brow! Over that card I sang, and I wept; I worked, I prayed, I believed! So much depended upon it! Could the Christ who upon whom I dictated it, fail to answer my prayer for success? Three hundred taunting friends! To jeer and torment me. The Christmas sun will shine on a pauper's empty cot in a charity hospital, on a disgraced, insulted, forsaken convict. Take away this last mockery, it is more than I can bear. There on the back in gilt letters—Prize Card—Three Hundred Dollars! Yet a stranger paid for my mother's coffin, and—Three hundred furies to lash my heart out! Too late! Take it away! too late! oh, too late! This is worse than the pangs of death!"

CHAPTER XV.

A CHRISTMAS VISIT. The Christmas Sabbath dawned cold and dim, and along the eastern sky grey marbled masses of cloud with striated bases, built themselves into the likeness of vast turrets to the zenith, over whose apex the struggling rays fell red and presageful. Dullled by the stained glass windows, the light that filled the semi-circular chapel at the Lilacs, was chill and sombre, until the fair sacristan held a taper over the tall candles on each side of the altar, whence a mellow radiance streamed over all; flashing along the golden tiles under the cross, and upon the gilded pipes of the organ. The family Bible of the Gordons lay open on the reading desk. Looking back the sacristan prayed, believing that the organ bench to await the coming of the family. In her morning robe of crimson cashmere, with its cascade of soft rich lace foaming from throat to feet, and wearing thinny cluster of double white violets fastened just below her ear, where the wax light kissed her sunny hair, she appeared a St. Cecilia, very fair and sweet, to the eyes of the man who stood a moment unperceived beneath the arch. A figure of medium height, clad in privacy garments; a finely modelled head thickly fleeced with light brown hair, a serene, pleasant face, with regular features, deep set black eyes magnified by spectacles, and an expression of habitual placidity, that bespoke a soul consecrated by noble aims, and all perfect peace with his God.

Hearing his step as he crossed the floor, Leo looked over her shoulder, smiled and began to play softly, while he ascended the steps and knelt before the altar. After some moments Miss Patty settled in, sank on her knees and finally settled herself comfortably on one of the crescent-shaped, cushioned sofas; then Judge Dent entered, followed by Justice and a negro butler, Joel, the two servants finding seats just behind their master. Doctor Leighton Douglas selected his hymns, and the leaves of the five prayer-books fluttered, as Collets were found, but Leo continued to play.

Twice she turned and looked around the chapel, seeking some one, delaying the commencement of the service. Finally accepting defeat, her pretty fingers fell from the keys and with them dropped two tears, forced from her by the keen disappointment that robbed this occasion of all its anticipated pleasure. Leighton Douglas read the morning service in a well-modulated voice, and with a profound solemnity that left its impress on each heart. The responses were fervent, and the Christmas hymns were sung with joyful earnestness; then priestly arms rose like the wings of a great snowy dove, and from holy, priestly lips, fell the music of the benediction: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all, evermore. Amen." Even while he pronounced the words, a whirring rustle filled the beautiful oratory, and two of Leo's petting-doves, fluttering around the frescoed ceiling, descended swiftly. One perched upon her head, cooing softly, and

watch and analyze my suffering as a Patient scrutinizes the marks of those of the victims into whose veins he has injected poison?"

"If she had drawn a lash across his face, it would not have stung more keenly than her words. "Will you consider for a moment the possibility that the motive of my scheme was that careless remorse, if you choose, for a terrible mistake, impels me to come here in the hope of making reparation?"

"Such a supposition is as inconceivable as the idea of reparation. There are wrongs that all time will never repair. Your sword of justice needs no whetting; one stroke laid me low."

"I purpose to file it two-edged, in order to make no more mistakes. Before long I shall cut down the real criminal—the principal—who shall not escape, and for whom you shall not suffer."

"What a noble match for both! And he's only her second cousin." Leo's eyes were wet with tears, which Doctor Douglas scribbled to devotional fervor; and withdrawing her hand, she opened one of the windows, and called the doves to the stone ledge, putting them gently upon the icy wreaths that clambered up the wall, and peeped into the chapel.

"I believe you are a scintilla here that the wind rushed in. "Yes, here I sweep, dust, decorate daily, allowing no other touch; and here I bring my faintest, rarest flowers, as tribute to Him who tapestried the earth with blossoms, and sprinkled it with perfumes."

Extinguishing the candles, she closed the old Bible, covered it with a square of velvet, and loosened the gilded chain that looped the curtain, and as the purple folds fell behind her, hiding the arch, Doctor Douglas said gently: "There is a solemn truth and wise admonition of one of Rabbi Tyn's dicta: 'Thy yesterday is thy past; thy to-day is thy future; thy to-morrow is a secret.'"

"Leo, here is a package and a note which arrived during service; and as Mr. Dunbar's servant said there was no answer expected, he did not wait."

As Miss Patty delivered the parcel to her niece, the minister walked away to lay aside his vestments, but he noted the sudden hastening of his cousin's face; the flash of displeasure, the haughty curl of her lip; and on his ears fell his aunt's voice: "You expected and waited for him at morning prayer?"

"I invited him to join us, if he felt disposed to do so."

"What possible excuse can he offer for such negligence, when he knew that Leighton would read the service?"

An unwonted sparkle leaped into Leo's mild hazel eyes, and without examination she handed the package and note to Justice.

"Lay them in the drawer of my writing-desk, and then call all the servants into the dining-room. Auntie, tardy excuses must wait longer for an audience than we waited for this evening; and breakfast; uncle will be impatient, and I want to enjoy his surprise when he sees his Santa Claus."

She was sorely disappointed, deeply affronted by Mr. Dunbar's failure to present himself on an occasion at which she had especially desired his presence; and as she recalled the affectionate phraseology of her note of invitation, her fair cheek burned with an intolerable sense of humiliation.

Through the benevolent and compassionate efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Singleton, some faint reflection of the outside world festivities penetrated the dismal monotony of prison routine; and the hearts of the inmates were softened and gladdened by kind tokens of remembrance, which carried the thought of the loved ones back to Christmas carols in innocent youth, and to the mother's knees where prayers were heaped.

Illness had secured to Beryl immunity from contact with her comrades in misery, and except to visit the little chapel, she never left the sheltering walls of her small, comfortable room. Her Christmas greeting had been little Dick's sweet lips kissing her cheek, as he deposited upon her narrow bed the black and white shawl his mother had knitted, and a box left by Miss Gordon on the previous day, which contained half a dozen pretty handkerchiefs with mourning borders, some delicate perfumes and soaps, toilet brushes and a sachet.

An hour later, when Mrs. Singleton and her babies had gone to spend the day with relatives in the city, Beryl went to the window, pushed the sash up, and listened to the ringing of the Sabbath-school bells. The warden had opened the door and quickly closed it, after ushering in a tall figure, who wore an overcoat which was buttoned from throat to knee.

"Good morning. I dare not utter here the greetings of the day, because you would construe it into a heartless mockery."

He came forward hesitatingly, and she turned swiftly away, pressing her face against the bars of the window, waving him back.

"Why will you persist in regarding an enemy, the one person in all the world who is most anxious to befriend you?"

"Still no answer; only the repellent gesture warning him away."

"Will you allow me, this Christmas morning, to comfort myself in some degree, by leaving here a few flowers to brighten your desolate surroundings?"

He held out a bouquet of rare and brilliant hot-house flowers, whose delicious fragrance had already pervaded the room. They stood side by side, yet she shrank father, and kept her face averted, shivering perceptibly. Lifting one arm, he drew down the sash to shut out the freezing air.

"You are resolved neither to look at nor speak to me? So be it. At least you must listen to me. You may not care to hear that I have been absent, but perhaps it will interest you to know that I went in search of the man for whose crime you are paying the penalty."

"I expected her to witness under the probe, her nerves were taut, and she defied the steel; but the face she soon turned fully to him as so blanched by illness, so hopeless in its rigid calm, that he felt a keen pain at his own heart."

"Prisoner, victims of justice, have it, no prisoners; else my next question, my earnest prayer, to be shielded from your presence, might have protected me from this intrusion. Is it a refinement of cruelty that brings you here to

"That's what I call relief from an unexpected quarter," said the tramp, who asked for a nickel and got a twenty-five cent piece.

Mrs. Winslow's SOOTHING SYRUP has been used by millions of mothers for their children while teething. It disturbed at night and broken of rest by a sick child crying with pain of cutting teeth said at once and get a bottle of "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup" for Children Teething. It will relieve the poor little sufferer immediately. Depend upon it mothers, there is no mistake about it. It cures Diarrhoea, regulates the Stomach and Bowels, cures Wind, Colic, softens the Gums and reduces Inflammation. It is pleasant to the taste. The prescription of one of the oldest and best female physicians and nurses in the United States, and is sold at 25 cents per bottle by all druggists throughout the world. Be sure and ask for "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup."

A game of "Living Whist" was played at Newburyport the other night. A gentleman in each case played the knave, but a lady played the deuce.

THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR. The Knights of Labor aim to protect their members against financial difficulties, etc. Hagyard's Yellow Oil protects all who use it from the effects of cold and exposure, such as rheumatism, neuralgia, lumbago, sore throat and all inflammatory pain. Nothing compares with it as a handy pain cure for man and beast.

Young wife—"Don't you consider marriage a means of grace, George?" Young husband—"Yes; anything is a means of grace that leads to repentance."

ATTACKED BY AN ENEMY. Dear Sirs,—About a year ago I had a very bad attack of dyspepsia. For nearly four months I never ate a meal without suffering pain after. I got so weak I could scarcely walk, when one day I saw an advertisement for B. B. B. and thought I would try a bottle. Four bottles cured me completely, and I am now strong and healthy. MISS JANET SWART, Muskoka, Falls, Ont.

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"German Syrup" Here is an incident from the South—Mississippi, written in April, 1890, just after the Grippe had visited that country. "I am a farmer, one of those who have to rise early and work late. At the beginning of last winter I was on a trip to the City of Vicksburg, Miss., where I got well drenched in a shower of rain; I went home and was soon after seized with a dry, hacking cough. This grew worse every day, until I had to seek relief. I consulted Dr. Dixon who has since died, and he told me to get a bottle of Bosclic's German Syrup. Meantime my cough grew worse and worse and then the Grippe came along and I caught that also very severely. My condition then compelled me to do something. I began using them, and before taking much of the second bottle, I was entirely clear of the cough that had hung to me so long, the Grippe, and all its bad effects. I felt tip-top and have felt that way ever since." PATTER J. BRIALS, Jr., Cayuga, Hines Co., Miss.

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