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LITERATURE.

HER REVENGE.

'How pretty your cousin is!' Paul Rosslyn said, lazily, to Miss Bertha May, as they stood in a cozy corner of a crowded saloon watching the dancing.

'Yes,' Bertha replied, her eyes following a little figure in blue, dancing with the keen enjoyment and zest that come only to the very young. 'She will be pretty when her manners are more formed and she gets over her hoyden tricks.'

'I like a tom-boy girl,' was the reply. 'Mind, I don't mean a fast woman. That is simply detestable; but a girl who is natural and has the fresh vivacity of youth.'

'You will find plenty of fresh vivacity in Bella,' Bertha replied, dryly. 'She is rather overpowering to my taste, though I love her dearly.'

Then a mustached, perfumed exquisite claimed Miss May for a galop, and Paul Rosslyn was left alone in his corner. A tall, broad-shouldered man, with a face of faultless regularity of feature; large gray eyes, whose color changed with every emotion, and a languid manner, that suited well the slight, very slight, drawl in his voice.

The little figure he was watching was most unlike the stately blonde with whom he had been conversing, the daughter of his hostess.

Isabelle Huntley was neither blonde nor brunette, having a fresh, clear complexion, large brown eyes, and a profusion of short, nut-brown curls, that nestled closely round her shapely little head. She was small and thin, being at the age when scragginess is fully developed, and her movements were far too abrupt for grace; yet she was pretty, too, as she lifted her great eyes to her partner's face and revealed a row of milk white teeth in some laughing remark.

When she sat down near her aunt, Paul sauntered across the room and commenced a conversation with Mrs. May, which led, as he hoped it would, to an introduction to 'my niece, Miss Huntley.' 'This is our nearest neighbor, Bella,' the lady said; 'so you will meet him often this summer.' And Bella, too entirely unconscious of her selfhood to be bashful, held out her gloved hand, and gave Mr. Rosslyn a schoolgirl's grip of welcome.

Mrs. May left them together, and Bella opened a conversation by informing the gentleman that she knew all about him. No reply following this startling piece of information, she added:

'Bertha drove me past your place yesterday as we came from the depot, and she told me you had just come from Europe because your father died—oh, I did not mean to say that; please pardon me if I hurt your feelings.'

'You did not,' he said slowly, watching with lazy admiration the quick changes of the expressive face.

'I thought how awfully jolly it must be to own that lovely house and grounds and do just as you please. When I leave school I've got to teach, you know, in the city; so all the country I ever see is what

I find in vacation, when Bertha has me down here. Bertha is very good to me,' she added, gratefully.

'Is she?' questioned Paul, amused at her frankness.

'Awfully!' with a great sigh. 'I've got no father nor mother, only Uncle Frank, and he's in China—and Aunt May. But Bertha tries to make up in vacation for the lonesomeness the rest of the time. Why, do you know, she gave me this party just to please me! I do so love dancing.'

'Will you waltz now?' said Paul; and in a moment he had taken a place among the dancers, and was waltzing with the easy grace of motion that is positive luxury to one who loves dancing for its own sake.

After the waltz was over he led his partner to a vine covered balcony, where they paced up and down in the summer sunlight and chatted of many things. Something in the frank, bright vivacity of Bella Huntley had a great charm for the world-weary man, who had traveled through the best society of two continents and had his heart still his own, though it had been badly bruised and punctured in his thirty years of life's warfare.

They talked of pictures, and Paul invited Bella to view the collection he had brought from abroad; of books, and he had promised her some not procurable in this country; of music, and he had an 'Erard' that nobody opened.

Looking back, after her head pressed the pillow, Bella wondered if there was ever such a delightful party and the walk on the balcony, the soft eyes of Paul Rosslyn, were certainly most prominent in the delights of the evening.

And he, smoking a cigar in his lonely library, yawned and voted all parties a 'bore,' country seat gatherings worst of all.

'In the city one can escape on plea of another engagement,' he thought, and then his musing took another form, and he concluded that he must marry and settle down.

The home of Mrs. May being separated from that of Mr. Rosslyn by only a slight iron fence, it was but natural the young man should find himself strolling under the trees in the morning, playing croquet in the afternoon or sentimentalizing upon the porch by moonlight. And the sound of his low, musical voice, the sight of his handsome face, grew to be dangerously pleasant to Bella.

As he had read deeply, had traveled much, and the girl, as the happy days flew along, became so much more sedate that Bertha noticed with a keen pang the dawning womanhood whose source she guessed only too well. She saw the careless dress becoming the subject of dainty finish, the brown locks carefully curled, instead of being combed hastily to tangle as they would, knots of ribbon tied under snowy ruffles, where hastily pinned collars were before. Loving her little cousin, she trembled, knowing what a sensitive brain and heart she carried under her brusque manners. And the man of the world studied the frank, expressive face and smiled to see how he could make it flush and brighten by his praise or droop under his disapproval of a sentiment or even a ribbon. He liked to watch the changing color upon the round cheek, the flash or mistiness of the large eyes and the quivers of the sensitive mouth; and, being of a thoroughly selfish nature, he never thought of the exquisite delicacy of the instrument that answered so quickly to his lightest words.

For, in a stately fashion, he was wooing Bertha May for his bride. She was handsome, would be wealthy and would preside gracefully over his house. So one moonlight night, when they sat alone on the wide balcony, he asked her to be his wife, neither of them seeing a little white robed figure behind the lace curtains of the drawing room window.

Bella's heart seemed to stop as she heard the proposal. In a second the child was a woman, a woman scorned. Clear as a bell came Bertha's voice:

'You are mistaken, Mr. Rosslyn; I am not Bella.'

'Bella!' with a light laugh. 'Why surely you do not imagine I wish to marry that child?'

'She is 16. Many girls marry at that age.'

'A bread and butter school girl? Ten years from now she will be a glorious woman; but she is a mere girl.'

'Yet you have wooed her as a woman.'

'You mistake! I never wooed her! Surely a man of my age may talk to a child of hers without misconstruction. But you, Bertha, you surely have read my heart more truly.'

'I read no love from there,' was the quiet reply, 'and if there were any no echo lives in my heart. We could never

be happy together, Mr. Rosslyn. The memory of my little cousin's wrongs would prevent that.'

He tried to move her by well-acted pathos, but she was firm, and he left her at last. While his step still rang upon the walk a little figure glided through the open window and crept into Bertha's arms, sobbing, but the tearless, a fierce, hot anger burning the whole nature.

'Bertha, he did tell me that I was the only one he ever met who thoroughly filled his idea of perfect, tender womanhood. He did! He said—he said—' (tears came now). 'Oh! what has he not said to make me love him! And he loved you all the time.'

'He loves no one but himself,' said Bertha, all her gentle nature roused to indignation. 'He is not worth one tear, Bella.'

'I know. But let me cry, Bertha, let me cry.'

Tenderly Bertha held the little figure in a close embrace, now and then pressing soft kisses upon the tear-stained face, until the passion of grief has exhausted itself, and the child—who is a child no more after to-day—rests passive and exhausted in her arms.

The autumn comes, the holidays are over and a pale, quiet girl goes back to boarding school, where Uncle Frank pays all the orphan's expenses and proposes to make her a teacher. Two years glide along, three, and once more Bella Huntley is her Aunt May's guest. In all these three years she has never been to the old house; but Bertha is married and in another part of the world, and her aunt is lonely. So Bella comes for a long visit; in fact, this will be her home until wedding bells ring for her, too. For Uncle Frank is dead, and Bella never teaches, being heiress to the large fortune the bachelor uncle has made in twenty years of trade in China.

The years of absence had changed the impulsive child into a woman of rare beauty, of a quiet dignity that suited well the tall, well-developed figure and statuesque regularity of feature. The clustering nut-brown curls had lost none of their waving luxuriance, though the tresses that, unbound, fell far below Bella's waist, were gathered away from the low, broad brow, and made rich masses of curls at the back of the pretty head.

When Paul Rosslyn accepted Mrs. May's invitation to a social gathering to welcome her niece he was wholly unprepared for the change in the girl he had totally forgotten until the note recalled her name. He was not a man given to demonstration of feeling, but he could not repress the admiration in his eyes when he bowed in acknowledgment of Bella's greeting. Memory brought him a fleeting vision of a thin, gawky girl, with great brown eyes and a frank, bright face, clad in the simplest of muslin dresses.

Reality brought him a tall, beautiful woman, with snowy round arms and shoulders, upon which sparkled costly jewels—a tall, graceful figure, clad in a shimmering lace covered silk, with masses of curls caught by a diamond-starred comb, and tiny hands with glittering rings.

The frank face, the clear, ringing voice were gone, too, and yet the low exquisitely modulated tones could leave no regret for any memory of different ones.

Before he realized the fascination that held him, Paul Rosslyn was conversing as he rarely conversed to man or woman. The quiet immobility of the lovely face roused him to efforts to stir it to animation that quite destroyed all his habitual languor, and he dropped the faint drawl to try to interest his listener in himself and subjects.

When she smiled, a strange thrill of pleasure stirred his heart, and when she seemed abashed he experienced a throb of disappointment that was a new sensation in his petted life.

For with one exception of Bertha's refusal, Paul had met no rebuffs in his many flirtations at home or abroad. With the facility that can only attend the utterly self-absorbed man, he had won silly hearts and thrown them aside till he believed his handsome face and tender eyes irresistible. He was not surprised when, after the first quiet greeting, Bella gave tokens of pleasure at his approach, entered readily into conversation with him and chose him often in crowded assemblages for her escort. It was a gay season, and the heiress was invited to all the meetings for young people, in doors or out, and Paul met her constantly.

He had held his heart bound by its own selfishness so long that he did not realize how it was slipping away from him till it was gone past recall. With a

shock he awakened to the fact that he loved Bella Huntley with all the force of boyish impulse, all the fervor of mature years; loved her utterly, without thought of her wealth or position, but for the radiant beauty of her face, the rare intellect and winning sweetness of her perfect womanhood.

And with the love there came little fear. He was wealthy, master of one of the finest estates in New York, handsome and of good birth. More than all, in those past summer days, he had won Bella's love. He was sure of that now, though it had troubled him little at the time. Vanity whispered that she had come to win him now.

So he was not a despairing lover, who on the same balcony where he had crushed her young heart three years before now pleaded for its love. Pleaded, too, as a man pleads for life. Not in the measured words with which he had asked Bertha to be his wife, but in burning, fiery eloquence taught by the first sincere love of his life.

And Bella listened, turning upon her finger a circlet of diamonds that flashed fire in the cold moonlight. When he ceased to speak, words as cold as drops of hail on glass answered him:

'Three years ago the love you ask for was all your own, won by your false words, your lying eyes. The child whose heart was your toy for a summer day's sport never questioned your sincerity, and put the treasures of her love into your careless keeping, never thinking of treachery. It was her first experience of pain when she tore that love away and held it off with her poor childish might till it drooped, faded and died.'

'There was contempt and scorn to wither it, and only a few tears to keep it green, so it died utterly. It can never revive again. I came to test that, I came to see if a new love in my heart would pale, if brought within the influence of old associations, and I have proved it stronger, truer, happier, by contrasting it with what you offer.'

'Then you have played with me!' he cried, fiercely.

'I amused myself. Three years ago you amused yourself.'

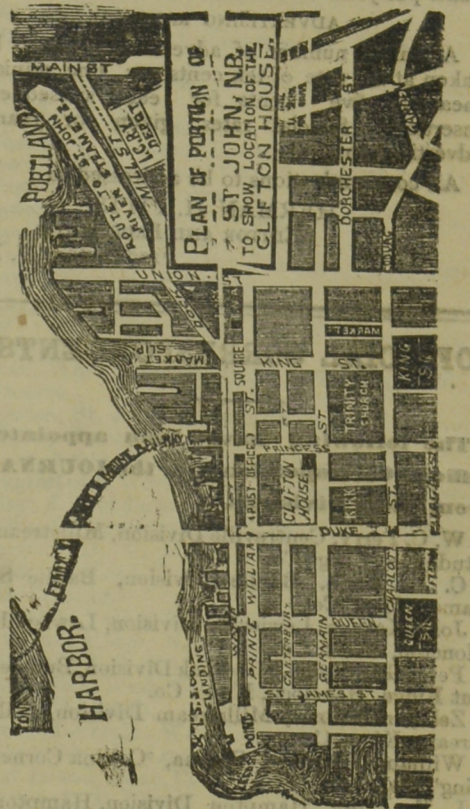
With an oath Paul Rosslyn strode away in the moonlight, and a hot tear dropped upon Bella's diamonds.

'It is a poor revenge, after all,' she said, softly. 'Leon, I will forget him now in your love—your love, given before I was an heiress—your love, that has conquered and obliterated all the heart pangs I suffered on this balcony when I was only a girl!'

AS A CO-LABORER WITH MAN.

Two difficulties lie at the root of woman's success as a co-laborer with man. The first is her lack of training; the second her lack of permanence. As a rule, woman is not educated with a view to any special trade or profession. She drifts into it. Men expect their daughters to marry. The daughters expect it. But so long as women numerically exceed men, the problem of woman's support cannot be solved by marriage. Even when a woman's necessities compel her to become self-supporting, she does not look upon it as a permanent thing. When she marries she drops it. She does not look upon a trade or a profession either as a life work. Therefore, her heart is often not in her work. She looks upon it only as a makeshift—a stepping stone to something better. Of course there are honorable exceptions—whole-souled, hearty, enthusiastic women who throw themselves into their work, whatever it may be, either from a genuine taste for their work or from conscientious motives. And such women make a success of their work—be it culinary, domestic, literary or artistic.

Many a woman fails through timidity. She is conscious of a strong leaning toward some vocation; it may be a service, a trade or a profession. But she is held back by custom, propriety, the restraints of family, her station in life, what the world will say, etc. Custom has a powerful influence over woman. She is still in swaddling bands. We are not speaking of lawless endeavors, but of lawful channels, opening a little out of the beaten path. That one woman she drove a sawmill in Florida and another navigate a steamboat in Louisiana, seem anomalies; in the one instance a thriftless husband, in the other a defunct spouse were the instruments which set these two plucky females afloat. Many women are capable of carrying on their husbands' business, not only with the hand, but with the head. They have tact, thrift, judgment, probity in their favor.



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