

stage in the very brutalities of master and slave; who comes to a higher life in the family; who seeks freedom again and again in romantic sentimentality or in stoical independence; who learns, however, always afresh, that in such freedom there is no truth; who returns, therefore, willingly to the bondage of good citizenship and of social morality; and who, finally, in the religious consciousness, comes to an appreciation of the lesson that he has learned through this whole self-enlarging process of civilization,—the lesson, namely, that all consciousness is a manifestation of the one law of spiritual life, and so, in the end, of the one eternal Spirit. The Absolute of Hegel's Phenomenology is no Absolute on parade, so to speak,—no God who hides himself behind clouds and darkness, nor yet a Supreme Being who keeps himself carefully clean and untroubled in the recesses of an inaccessible infinity. No, Hegel's Absolute is, I repeat, a man of war. The dust and the blood of ages of humanity's spiritual life are upon him; he comes before us pierced and wounded, but triumphant,—the God who has conquered contradictions, and who is simply the total spiritual consciousness that expresses, embraces, unifies, and enjoys the whole wealth of our human loyalty, endurance, and passion.

And herewith I must, for the present, close. It will, perhaps, be already plain to the reader that there is a great deal in this Hegelian analysis of self-consciousness that seems to me of permanent and obvious value. As to the finality of the philosophical doctrine as a whole, that is another matter, not here to be treated. Still, I may, perhaps, do well, in closing, to suggest this one thought: People usually call Hegel a cold-hearted system-maker, who reduced all our emotions to purely abstract logical terms, and conceived his Absolute solely as an incarnation of dead thought. I, on the contrary, call him one who knew marvelously well, with all his coldness, the secret of human passion, and who, therefore, described, as few others have done, the paradoxes, the problems, and the glories of the spiritual life. His great philosophical and systematic error lay, not in introducing logic into passion, but in conceiving the logic of passion as the only logic; so that you in vain endeavor to get satisfaction from Hegel's treatment of outer nature, of science, of mathematics, or of any coldly theoretical topic. About all these things he is immensely suggestive, but never final. His system, as system, has crumbled. His vital comprehension of our life will remain forever.

*Josiah Royce.*

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## IN DARKNESS.

DUMB Silence and her sightless sister Sleep  
 Glide, mistlike, through the deepening Vale of Night;  
 Waking, where'er their shadowy garments sweep,  
 Dream-voices and an echoing dream of light.

*John B. Tabb.*

## FELICIA.

## XIII.

THE next six weeks, outwardly brilliant, were a prolonged trial of skill, in which Kennett, instead of merely preserving his rank as *facile princeps*, as in Hallet's troupe, found it necessary to hold his own among singers more nearly his equals. He threw himself heart and mind into the effort to do his capacity full justice, and in this protracted crisis his professional interests absorbed him more than ever to the exclusion of his personal interests.

Perhaps no man fully interprets that subtle and obscure scripture, a woman's nature, least of all the nature of a woman like Felicia, supersensitive, proud, intolerant; in a certain complicated sense insistently conscientious; susceptible to definite yet delicate influences which might not affect a differently organized individuality. Kennett did not realize all she felt, and he dared not allow himself to dwell upon the possibility that she was suffering. It was a positive and practical necessity that he should eschew any cause of agitation and disquiet; that he should live in a simple, normal, prosaic, emotional atmosphere. There had been a reconciliation between them, — tears, regrets, self-reproaches, — and each had promised to remember no more the other's hasty words. Kennett had made this promise in all good faith, and had dismissed the episode but for the recurrent suspicion, which he sought to ignore, that it still remained with her.

She had no deep absorption to lighten gradually the intensity of her contending feelings. Her pride, her wounded self-esteem, her love, made the thought intolerable to her, yet she brooded for hours on that crucial interview. That he should have looked at her with those cruel eyes, — that he should have spoken

those sneering words! She would remind herself that she had promised to forget it, but she would recur to it with a sort of willfulness despite the pain; a certain obduracy was aroused in her; it was strange to her that her heart should be at once so sore and so hard.

Is there not a trifle of ambiguity in our exposition of moral values? Those sweeping phrases, generosity, selfishness, for example, — in certain jugglery of forces, do they not become sometimes interchangeable? The soul that can invest itself in what one may call a state of slippèd ease; that can acquiesce, concede, constrain its own approval, shut out the turmoil of endeavor, the exactions of a definite ideal, the embittering processes of contention with the antagonistic forces of other ideals, is in a certain sense a fortunate soul. And generous? We usually say so. But this suggestion is submitted: to forego is an easy process.

Felicia's standards, artificial, perhaps, — perhaps unworthy, — were imperative. It would have been comforting to compromise; with her, compromise was impossible. In what she deemed due to herself, always a potent force with her, she was still more exacting when her feelings were deeply involved. The life, too, brought its peculiar elements of trial. There was much in this abnormal, showy, brilliant midsummer "season" against which, loyal to her estimate of the becoming, she revolted. Last winter's seclusion was now impossible. Then the contact with the public had been slight enough, confined principally to the hotel dining-rooms and railway trains; now, in these sojourns at the crowded resorts, life was all out-of-doors, — on piazzas, at the spring, on the beach. Felicia, accustomed from her earliest childhood to be regarded by strangers

with respectful admiration, was stung by the eyes which rested upon her with curiosity, admixed with perhaps a little wonder that, being what she evidently was, she should be placed as she was. Infinitely more bitter it was to her whenever it chanced that Kennett's striking appearance attracted the attention of certain notable men, as they lounged about, watching the kaleidoscopic pageantry on the esplanade. She would see their glances follow him, and would divine, as they turned to some well-informed *habitué*, that they asked who he was. They were for the most part portly, red-faced fathers of families, — judges, like her own father, bank presidents, railroad magnates. These, last winter, had been merely a portion of the great, unindividualized public; now they were separate personalities, easily differentiated. Sometimes it almost seemed to her that she had been endowed with a sixth sense denied to happier people, — a sense of intuitive mental vision, by which she knew, as well as divined, the process through which the curiosity of these gentlemen was transmuted, as their inquiry was answered, into a surprised comprehension, too slighting in its quality to be even contempt. It was intolerable that this valuable element of society should esteem her husband "a singing fellow," as if he were of another order of beings. It does not come easily to a woman of her sort to say, concerning the man she loves, "nevertheless," to make allowances, to overlook, to palliate. She would fain have exulted in him. She realized poignantly how proud she could be of him, had he attained a measure of success in what her father and brother called the sane walks of life equal to that which he had achieved in this vocation of his. She said to herself, fiercely, piteously, helplessly, that it was his right, his due, that he should have a place among estimable and successful men of position, — and ah, how many of these there

were in the world! — a place as an equal, even a superior; for who can say how far force may carry when exerted in the right direction! She craved this for him; and yet she too held almost religiously her father's and her brother's views as to the sane walks of life. Her heart ached for him that he should be deprived of the solid values of existence; she was almost enraged against him that he could not understand his deprivation.

So grievous was this chagrin that it even dwarfed what she felt when she met the amused contempt in the faces of the women who knew her own story; for not unfrequently they encountered women who knew it. It seemed a very perverse fate that this should happen now, yet the previous summer, when she would have been glad to meet any of her old schoolmates or acquaintances, she saw only strangers.

In the first episode of this kind a deeper sentiment was involved than amused contempt. The incident occurred at one of the notable seaside hotels. Kennett and Felicia had just finished their late breakfast, and were walking down the long piazza. A trio of ladies, presumably last night's arrivals, was advancing toward them. Suddenly Felicia quickened her steps, with an exclamation; her lips were parted in such a smile of pleasure as they had not known for many a day. The trio faltered; indeed, the eldest, a large, well-preserved, well-dressed woman of fifty, almost came to a standstill; then she swept onward, detaching an eyeglass from its catch and adjusting it composedly.

"How do you do?" she said, bowing and smiling graciously. "Glad to see you here." And she would fain have proceeded.

It was an awkward moment, — doubly awkward because of spectators; a number of persons, sitting and standing about, were looking on with the intense interest of the desperately idle. Felicia had been so evidently pleased, her accelera-

tion of pace and her exclamation were so noticeable, that to pass now without pausing would be very marked. With an *aplomb* hardly to be expected in so young a woman, she halted unflinchingly in front of the elder lady, and extended her hand. Mrs. Morris's condescension, it must be admitted, was distanced in the spirited half minute's dash that ensued.

"So pleased to see you," said Felicia, with composed ceremoniousness of manner. "Let me introduce my husband. You will have the pleasure of hearing him sing. Shall be glad to send you tickets. Your daughters are quite well?" She smiled and beamed on the hesitating young ladies. Her tone was that of a woman advanced beyond them in some way, — much older and long ago married.

She held the fort; she was the centre and mainspring of the situation. She had never looked more beautiful. She was in brilliant health; the long hours she had spent in the open air, this summer, had suffused her delicate skin with a rich glow which was very becoming to her. About her slim, elegant figure floated the folds of one of her effective costumes, at once simple and elaborate, gray of tint with elusive suggestions of faint green. Her pose, as Kennett might have said, was good, — very good; her head was erect, but not held haughtily; her attitude had a certain alertness, as of a bird about to fly; her eyes were very bright, and dark, and smiling; her teeth gleamed through her parted red lips; she was airily self-possessed.

"I hope you will be here for some time," she said, with suavity. "Good-morning. Au revoir."

She swept away, with Kennett beside her. The Morris girls glanced over their shoulders at her tall, impressive, well-dressed blond husband. They thought Felicia's fate romantic, and said to each other that she was more beautiful than ever.

"Why did you snub the old lady?" de-

manded Kennett, selecting chairs where they could look out upon the drive as well as at the palpitating blue sea.

"Did n't you understand? She attempted to snub *me*. She does n't consider me as important as she once did."

"Oh," he returned, enlightened, "was that it!"

"And Mabel Morris and I were like sisters once!" cried Felicia, with a sharp pain in her voice. "I used to go to their home as familiarly as they themselves. Papa could never pet them enough, because they were fond of me. When he was in New York, it was one continual round of opera, and theatre, and driving, and presents, and lovely times for us three. Mrs. Morris was fond of me, too; and now she does not want Mabel to speak to me. I am an awful example and a dangerous acquaintance."

He thought she was on the verge of tears, but she pulled herself together by a violent effort, and gave a bitter little laugh instead. He saw how keenly she was hurt.

"I would n't care for her," he said, soothingly.

"I don't care for her; I care for myself," said Felicia, dryly.

Mrs. Morris's fears as to a renewal of the old intimacy were groundless. Somehow, whenever she or her daughters chanced to be thrown into Felicia's vicinity, something particularly interesting was on hand. "That great three-masted vessel an English ship with a cargo of jute? Jute! How interesting!" Or, "Only see, Hugh, how those sail-boats are tossing on this choppy sea; they seem to be courtesying to each other." Or she had just been told that the strange commotion in the water was occasioned by the passing of porpoises, and she was absorbed in watching for a glimpse above the waves of the ungainly creatures, only aroused to a consciousness of the existence of her friends when Kennett gravely bowed as he raised

his hat. Then she would look up suddenly and also bow, and smile the society smile, which means many things or nothing at all. At first Mrs. Morris was relieved to discover that that bland "Au revoir" had been merely a figure of speech, but later she was angered.

"Felicia Hamilton poses as if she were still Felicia Hamilton!" the astute lady declared, in irritation.

"She seems very happy," said the elder daughter pensively, looking at the couple as they strolled down the beach. He was opening her parasol; he had her light wrap over his arm; he bent his head as he talked to her.

"And he is very handsome," added Mabel.

Mrs. Morris glanced sharply from one to the other.

Later in the day, Mabel remarked, apropos of nothing, that the basso, Mr. Dalton, was also very handsome; and it was within an hour that Mrs. Morris was smitten with a dreadful pain in her eyes, which she said must be due to the intense glare of the sun on the water. She felt sure that she had better take the first train for New York and consult an oculist, and thence proceed to some place where shade was possible, — the Adirondacks, perhaps. Trunks were hastily packed, and before sunset the party was off, — a handkerchief binding the eyes of the suffering lady.

Felicia did not again make the mistake of manifesting pleasure upon meeting old acquaintances. A bow, a smile, sometimes a few words when the advances came from the other side, constituted her social experience during the summer. Her sensitive pride, thoroughly on the alert, defended her against a second peril of discomfiture.

One of these chance meetings was an encounter with the Graftons. It occurred in the dining-room of the hotel at which the Hamilton party had sojourned, while at the seaside the previous summer. She and Kennett were

entering; the Graftons were going out. Little Mrs. Grafton peered at Felicia with startled, beadlike eyes, her pointed head inquiringly askew, her diminutive nostrils quivering. Then she glanced affrightedly up and down the long floor, as if in search of a hole to run into; then she said, "How do you do?" in a very high, thin voice, much as she might have said, "Squeak, squeak," and walked on with the air of scuttling. Nellie stared with her hard, round black eyes, — Felicia thought Madame Sevier was not doing much for Nellie. Alfred bowed frigidly. "How he must gloat over my ill-regulated mind!" meditated Felicia, bitterly.

Meeting him here brought back last summer very vividly to her recollection. By an odd coincidence, the room assigned to her was the one she had then occupied. She softened a little the first evening of her arrival, her eyes on the chair by the window where she used to sit and look out, as well as she could for her tears, at the shining track of molten silver light, as the moon sailed over the sea. "How unhappy I was!" she thought, commiserating that other self, and losing in the recollection of the old grief some of the poignancy of the new. She had half resolved to tell Kennett, when he should come back from the concert, the history of that little chair, — how she used to sit there, night after night, with her head on the window sill, and weep her heart away because he had not answered her note. Perhaps he would be interested; perhaps the constraint of feeling that had infused itself into their relations would disappear, and life would become more endurable.

He returned in a bad humor, however; something had gone wrong with the accompaniment, and he commented bitterly, — a rare thing with him, for control of his temper was a part of his professional system. "When a damned idiot," he said fiercely between his set

teeth, "who pretends to know nothing but music, can't see a *rallentando* when it is marked plainer than print, what is he fit for!"

Once Felicia might have suggested "treason, stratagems, and spoils;" but pleasantries did not come to her readily nowadays, and she only looked at him in silence as he kicked the historic chair, that happened to stand in his way, and instituted a tense and vivacious search for his slippers, and demanded of her if she thought it was beneficial to a neuralgic headache to sit before an open window. Obviously it was no occasion for sentiment, and before he recovered his equanimity the impulse had passed.

He was not altogether satisfied with his work during the summer engagement. To be sure, he had been praised, he had made reputation; he was persuaded that he would receive such offers as he desired for another season. But he realized that not once had he done himself full justice; not once had he sung as he could sing, — as he sang that afternoon to the empty woods, and the coming storm, and the tender heart of his wife. It was a very subtle difference, but very strong, — the difference between excellence and exaltation. From time to time, as the weeks wore on, he canvassed within himself the policy of saying something of this to Felicia. Such a course — a direct appeal to her generosity — might have been wise policy. But a man of pride is likely to find a certain difficulty in submitting to his wife, who somewhat ungraciously protests against his calling, a plea for her smiles as a factor of his success in that calling. Caution, too, withheld him. There was no predicting how she might, with her strong feeling upon the subject, receive the suggestion. It might be applying fire to the fuse. With his professional existence dependent in a great measure on serenity, it would not do for him to risk explosions.

Little had been said between them, of

late, as to his professional work, but that little had served to deepen his realization of her objections. To him her attitude was even more illogical than heretofore. There was some talk, about the beginning of the regular season in September, of substituting, during the coming winter, for Prince Roderic, which, although still drawing well, was now a trifle familiar to a change-loving public, a new work, — one of those that belong to what might be called the romantic-grotesque school, which, through music more or less meritorious and costumes always effective, sometimes gorgeous, has reopened fairyland to people who have forgotten the fairyland of youth.

When Felicia heard this suggestion she openly rebelled, little though it availed her, as she knew. Since she had come to understand something of her husband's professional life, and had realized the gap between his estimate of his capacity and his opportunity, between his exacting and elevated musical and dramatic sense and the slightness of the compositions to which he must devote himself, she had experienced an extreme irritation for his sake. Intensely as she deprecated his career, she resented as intensely that he did not at least have the place in it which he coveted. His acceptance of whatever task was set before him, as a step upward, as means to an end; his respect for his own work, in however distasteful a guise; his careful and conscientious rendition of rôles unworthy of him, almost dismayed her; she thought his patience tragical. She had constrained herself to say as little of this as she might, and he did not divine that even so questionable a sympathy as this sort of partisanship was involved in her disapprobation of his career.

In regard to the proposed addition to his *répertoire*, however, she suddenly abandoned her bitter neutrality. She was deeply agitated when she entreated him to refuse such a rôle. To his amaze-

ment, the objection she urged was that the opera was amusing. He could not appreciate her distinctions when she seriously declared that it was more endurable to sing in such an opera as Prince Roderic, because it was a romantic opera; that the character of Prince Roderic was dignified, and even noble. She insisted that there is an immense difference between wit and fun, — that one is a brilliant, and the other mere paste; that it is admirable to be witty, and odious to be funny; that even in genteel comedy, while the author and the work may have the quality of wit, the delineator upon the stage does not share its dignity; he is only funny, is only comical.

All the world knows more or less of that strange contradiction which almost suggests the idea of a dual set of mental qualifications appertaining to the histrionic artist, by which the mediocre mind suddenly becomes endowed with a foreign intellectuality, the trifler conceives heroism, the jester tragedy, the small soul invests itself in majesty. Thus Kennett, the gravest and most sedate of men, held as an instrument the strings of mirth, and played airily upon them at his will, with the delicate touch of the born comedian, with irresistible drollery, with incomparable humor. Felicia had often meditated on this phase of his talent, so strangely at variance with his nature, and with that massive, heroic histrionism which he arrogated to himself. Had he truly the two developments of the dramatic gift? she wondered; or did he mistake himself, — would his rendition of those exalted rôles, to which he was so sure he could give new and worthy interpretations, prove only clever unconscious imitations?

With her contradictory ambitions for him, — all at war with her sense of fitness, — she, too, would fain have lifted her eyes to the great heights of the profession. And so the lesser gift was un-

endurable to her, — that a turn of his head, a lift of his eyebrows, should send ripples of laughter over the house, rising into peals when he chose. When she further reflected on the possible make-up in the rôles of the unknown opera which was presently to be put in rehearsal, — it was rumored already a marvel of melody and grotesqueness, — she looked at him piteously through her infrequent tears, declaring that it would be like death to her if she should see him make himself ridiculous. Surely, she insisted, he must feel sufficiently strong in his position to stipulate that he should have only serious and noble characters like Prince Roderic.

He could think of no rational reply, except that he could not in prudence attempt to dictate to the management as to the cast. With his lifelong habit of looking at such matters from the purely professional standpoint, he could only consider these views of hers absurd.

“It does not seem to me a very fine thing to sing the rôles of Assad or Lohengrin, as you hope some time to do. But this! This is advancing backward. Yet you think you are ambitious!”

He winced; his color rose; he bent upon her a sparkling eye.

“Do you mean that as a taunt,” he demanded, sharply, “because I get on slowly?”

She made no reply; she had turned aside her face; he could see the tears slipping through her fingers.

Mindful as he always was of the dictates of policy, these might not have restrained him now, so intensely was he irritated. But there was something in her attitude so piteous, expressing a grief which was almost desolation, that he experienced a revulsion of feeling; his anger vanished. He took her cold hand in his; he kissed her averted cheek; he attempted to argue the matter. She only turned her head and looked at him. He saw how far too deep for coaxing or reasons was her cha-

grin, and in sheer futility his words died on his lips.

The recollection of this scene did not offer any inducement to attempt to establish more sympathetic relations as to his professional work. Further considerations added their weight, — not perhaps distinctly acknowledged to himself, but vaguely appreciated. He was beginning to feel that for other reasons the divergence between them was widening. In a matter of importance to them both, the matter of economy, it seemed impossible that they should act in accord. He had, with reluctance and misgivings, broached the subject of his financial condition. At first he was greatly relieved that she received the communication with composure and philosophy, and promised readily that she would spend as little money as possible. It was only by degrees that he learned that economy, like other sciences, is not to be picked up in a day. In order to cut off superfluities it is necessary to recognize them as superfluities. It seemed to him unaccountable that her ideas should be so vague. Expenses which, in his opinion, the merest common sense should have suggested the propriety of curtailing were allowed to continue, while others, which were as plainly necessary, she proposed eliminating. Her lavishness was not so much an expression of self-indulgence as an expression of taste, and this fact added another complication to the puzzle of her attitude. He could not understand why she so often unreasonably and spasmodically indulged her whims, when she was evidently capable of relinquishing them lightly and without regret. The explanation was the simplest and most prosaic possible. To arrange expenditure so judiciously as to reduce self-denial to the minimum is only to be learned through practice. Felicia had had no such practice. To her economy meant deprivation. She could endure, when she happened to remember his injunc-

tions, to give up what she liked; she did not know how to arrange to attain what she most liked.

She had no realization that she was inconsistent and thoughtless; on the contrary, it was evident that she was in good faith disposed to take to herself credit for moderation. She showed him one day, for example, a wrap which she had just bought, and seemed to expect him to be gratified that it cost fifteen dollars less than another which she had preferred. "The one at sixty-five had much more *chic*," she remarked, contemptively, as she held it up, "but this will have to do."

"That little affair cost fifty dollars!" he exclaimed, aghast. "Surely, Felicia, you don't need so expensive a wrap. Why can't you wear the one you bought last spring until it is cold enough for your cloak?"

"I wore that all the spring, and the trimming on this is much prettier; indeed, it is quite a new idea. I had to get something to wear with my dark silk dresses," she had replied, looking at him with clear, convincing eyes. "A severely plain walking costume is n't always suitable, you know. And fifty dollars is very reasonable for such a dolman as this."

He could not argue the matter. He too was subject to heavy demands from the tyranny of fashion. It was part of his stock in trade to be always exceptionally well dressed and prosperous looking, off as well as on the stage. He could not estimate her needs, but he experienced much irritation when, after a long silence, in which she was evidently thinking deeply, she rose, opened the wardrobe, and placed beside the new wrap the one he had mentioned.

"After all," she said, meditatively, "there is very little difference in style. I wish I had not bought this. It did not occur to me at the time, but I *could* have managed without it."

"You should have considered that

earlier, now that you understand our circumstances," he said.

He thought her carelessness culpable ; she thought his look and tone of cold reproof unwarrantably severe.

Such episodes did not tend to reestablish harmony between them. She felt that he did not appreciate the efforts she made to meet his views, and it might have been well if her chagrin because of this had expressed itself in tears and reproaches. He could not gauge her intention ; her constraint of manner impressed him as insensibility ; it seemed to him that her acquiescence had been merely a matter of form, and that her course argued an extreme indifference to his wishes. This was the more bitter as he had become far more harassed than she supposed, — what involved man ever tells his wife all his affairs ! Kennett had said he was afraid of getting into debt, and he was in debt ; not very deeply as yet, it is true, but these things are relative. His resources were slight, and under these circumstances a small debt is a large one. The money he had made in that unexpected prosperous summer "season" was already gone, — how, he could hardly say. He felt that it might be wise policy to go over the whole ground with Felicia, and tell her frankly how he stood ; but, with the illogical perversity of the man who is the prey of financial anxiety, he upbraided her severely in his thoughts, because of her indifference to those troubles of his which she did not know, as well as her supposed insensibility to those of which he had told her. He shrank from further talk on the subject, and put it off from day to day. It appeared to him now that he had made a serious mistake in not securing her hearty coöperation in this matter of economy in the early time of their marriage, when, as he believed, his influence was much stronger than now.

It seemed to him that even mentally she had become strangely at variance

with her former self. He remembered the interest she had felt in the drama of life as it was enacted before her ; its slightest episode gave her food for thought, for comparisons, conjectures, conclusions. No human beings were too insignificant to attract from her a certain contemplative attention, as being results of that great experiment Circumstance, and as carrying within them, however superior, or commonplace, or sordid their environment, the burning fire of regret or aspiration, the sting of disappointment, the bloom of joy or of hope. Now she saw no dramas ; she interpreted no more lives. She had lost her unconsciously semi-philosophic attitude. If, by chance, seeking to rouse her interest, he directed her attention to some incident denoting character, which she would in that former time have found suggestive, she gave it a perfunctory notice, soon displaced by her own absorbing personal musings. She appeared antagonistic even to those human sympathies. Once she said to him with bitterness that it would have been appropriate, considering how very tiresome it is to see so many strangers, that a plague of faces should have been sent upon the Egyptians in addition to the plagues of locusts and frogs. He did not fully apprehend the significance of this development of her character. Strange that he, so thoroughly accustomed to the dramatic world, should not have realized so obvious a matter as the difference between the standpoint, the outlook, of spectator and of actor.

In his augmented anxieties he was denied the relief of irritability, which, bitter though it may be, is in some sort a safety valve. It had long been his creed that serenity is of the first importance for a singer. The habit of self-control stood him in good stead in one sense : he did not have to contend against the exhausting effect upon the nerve of outbreaks of temper. But the strenuous restraint involved also a sense of effort,

and he began to suffer from a depression which became more and more paralyzing. Under its influence he saw only the dark side of his affairs, and he vaguely presaged calamity: that his work would become mechanical; that his voice would lose its magnetism, his acting its spontaneity; that his popularity would wane or his health would fail.

He made the best fight he could against his increasing morbidness, but in those days heavy cares beset him, and he grew very taciturn and thoughtful.

That year the autumn came on early, with long cold rains and leaden clouds which the sun did not penetrate for weeks. The continuous dripping, dripping, of the rain seemed to extinguish by degrees all the fire in Felicia's nature. As a last resort for occupation she had addicted herself to fancy-work, and the endless plying of a crochet or an embroidery needle dulled without soothing her. The work was as colorless as that of a treadmill, for she had little interest in the results, which were in truth of doubtful value, — this was another art in which she was not proficient. When she had completed a miraculous tidy or "banner," she would listlessly push it away, reassort her materials, and languidly begin another. Often as not she left these trophies of her skill at the hotel, when they departed, and the admiring chambermaid regarded them as a godsend.

They continued habitués of the first-class hotels. Kennett, however, still casting about for means of cutting down expenses, had fallen into the habit of engaging rooms in the upper stories of those caravansaries which made desirability of location a matter of price. While comfortable, these rooms were not so luxurious as those on the lower floors, and somehow their elevation added to their dismalness. When the dense clouds rested on the cornices of the roofs opposite, and the street lamps were

merely a yellow blur in the thick-falling rain, and the wind swept around the corner with a dreary moan, the sense of isolation was complete. Then Felicia, sitting alone, would let her hands and party-colored worsteds fall upon her lap and wonder pitifully at the strange sarcasm of her fate. She would say to herself bitterly that she had no mother, no sister; her father had cast her off; her brother hated — no, scorned her; she had not a friend to whom she could go for comfort or companionship; she was losing her hold on her husband's heart; her place in the world was, in her estimation, uncouthly incongruous. Once she had hoped that God would send her children. Now she told herself that it would be well if this should never fall to her lot. Every blessing proved for her a bane. He had given her beauty, wealth, health, friends, love, — to what end? To have tears as comrades and bitter thoughts as her part in life; to be as distinctly alone in this busy, throbbing, eager world as if she were indeed cast away on a desert island, in the midst of a lonely sea. So her griefs asserted themselves and took possession of her. The gas flared, and the rain trickled down the window panes, and the wind moaned about the room perched up so close against the black cloud; while Kennett, half a dozen squares away, with a light heart or a heavy, it mattered not which, splendid and glittering in crimson and stage jewels, posed before the footlights, and sang of love or revenge, and stabbed himself or his rival, as circumstances required, with propriety, precision, and a stage dagger.

About this time she became conscious of a bitter experience, — she became conscious that from a certain plane of mental and moral development she was reaching downward, willfully and intentionally. The worldly-mindedness which her father had deplored in her nature had so far expressed itself in a definite

appreciation of the insignia of worldly values, environment, high-breeding, luxury, culture. Now it seemed to her that she went further than this. Money was in itself a fine thing; it was a first necessity to be rich and highly placed. Once she would have said it was well to be at ease in regard to money; that appropriate surroundings, beautiful dress, and associates of superior social station were the charming incidents of a fortunate position in life, but to care inordinately for these things was vulgar; they should be a matter of course if one had them, a matter of slight consequence if one had them not; they were accessories. She had arrogated to herself some credit that she could thus regard the matter. Once she had been capable of the resolve to look upon the men and women about her as human beings, apart from their station; now she refused disdainfully to make such effort; she was conscious only of their solecisms, their professional and other slang, their Bohemianism, — even their shabbiness of dress in the dishevelment of railway trains and hasty appearances at hotel tables. Contradictorily, this angered her against herself, and she would upbraid herself as a snob. She would ask herself how it was that she, who was of this stratum of society, should ally herself in thought and feeling with the class who would scornfully reject her could they suspect such presumption; that she, who had no position, should so vividly appreciate the position of fortunate people; that she, who was a wanderer and homeless, should look with wistful eyes at the showy, spacious city mansions, the big, comfortable country villas, of magnates like her father and brother, her social superiors, and picture to herself the life encompassed by those imposing and solid walls.

It was a many-faceted emotional experience she was undergoing with such stolidity of demeanor as she could command. Kennett did not apprehend it in

its entirety; he might only realize the phase immediately presented. His deductions, sufficiently bitter and in one sense correct, did not put him fully in possession of her troublous heart and mind. Yet, so far as he could judge, her whole state of feeling was revealed to him one night when, in their progress through the South, they entered the city to which the little town of Blankburg, her former home, was contiguous and tributary. There had been a railway accident, — a freight train in front of them had been wrecked, — and they did not arrive till after midnight. As they drove from the depot to the hotel, her consciousness was impressed with the strong sentiment of place, so indefinable, yet so tyrannous. How was it that even the obscurity of night, which might seem the full expression of nullity, was so distinctly imbued with the flavor of locality! The taste of the soft, bland air as she inhaled it, the drawing intonation of voices on the street, even the sights and sounds common to all railroad termini, were as if inalienably characteristic of this place only among so many similar places, and suggested vividly to her, with inexpressible melancholy and remoteness, another life out of which she seemed to have died. It chanced that they were stopped and detained in the press of vehicles in front of a dwelling which was lighted from garret to cellar, evidently the scene of festivity. During the stoppage the window of their carriage gave a full view of the occupants of another carriage close by. So close were they that every feature of two young girls was distinctly visible in the yellow light from the street lamps. They were dressed in fleecy fabrics, with much airy effect of laces and suggestive bloom of flowers. They had gentle, candid eyes and fair hair; their voices had a soft, suave quality and a distinct drawl, as they spoke to the sleek, dapper young fellows with downy mustaches, very point-device as to dress,

who were lingering with adieux and last words at the carriage door. They all laughed appreciatively at mutual witticisms, and were evidently enjoying with all the capacity of their natures every moment of the occasion. Other ladies and gentlemen in festal attire were descending the steps; adieux, and laughter, and the confusion of coachmen's voices, and conflicting orders, were on the air; evidently the moment of dispersion had arrived, although the music of a band was still audible through the open windows.

Felicia felt acutely that she was looking on with some of the spirit animating the loafers about the sidewalk, standing agape as the fine folks filed down the steps, — a sense of utter exclusion, of admiration, of distance; and were these also admixed with envy and bitterness?

The jam was over; the carriages were moving slowly apart; the eyes of the young girls met hers with a long, friendly look. She could see that they were about her own age, and how old she felt! Somehow, that moment of fellowship with them was sweet to her. She glanced back over her shoulder at them, a half smile on her lips.

"How happy they are!" she said.

"And how frivolous!" added Kennett, as the buoyant laughter of the *callo beaux* split the air.

They rolled on into the darkness. The sound of music and the murmur of voices died away.

"After all," said Kennett sharply, "the fleshpots of Egypt are precious to you yet!"

She too spoke sharply. "Especially as the supply of manna is rather meagre in my instance," she said.

Tears had rushed to her eyes, but he did not see them. He looked gloomily out of the window at the distant gas jets jeweling the darkness, stretching in two long lines across the bridge, and disappearing on the opposite shore. He could credit her only with the most obvious

and primary sentiment implied by her words and manner, — that she realized acutely all she had renounced; especially, it seemed to him, its more trivial and least worthy values. He did not remember that to her these trivial values had extraneous worth as exponents of a status. He had conceived the idea of exile, in a sense. He could give the character of expatriated prince a professional "reading;" but the real thing is a development only fairly to be apprehended by actual trial. It is a unique experience, not to be compassed at second hand. Kennett was breathing his native air; he could not fully interpret banishment.

The troupe had gone South from the Eastern cities by way of Washington, and as the route took them from New Orleans northward they experienced rapid climatic changes. It had been something of a trial to Felicia, the previous season, to spend two weeks in Chilounatti. The estrangement from her brother and his children had then been a great grief to her, bitterly as she had resented his attitude. Now it was far worse. The realization of their close proximity came upon her sore heart with a new, heavy weight. She would stand at her window, when Kennett had gone to the theatre, looking from her great height, and attempt to single out one roof in the sunshine in the sea of roofs, or one yellow spark in the darkness among the great constellation of yellow gleams. She often had a tyrannous impulse to walk in that direction, with a shrinking hope that she might, unseen, see her brother, or his wife, or the children; then she would recoil from the half-formed intention, in terror lest she should be recognized and ignored. She pictured to herself their routine, — dull, perhaps, but constantly widening since the days when she made a part of it; simple and seemly, with its recognized duties, and appropriate pleasures, and the passing zest of its incidents.

Her experience of life was not such as to suggest the sardonic consolation that matters were no worse, and that her lot had even certain prosaic alleviations. In the long segregation, during those years at Sevier Institute, from the atmosphere of domestic existence, the married state had been presented but slightly to her contemplation. She had speculated vaguely upon that foreign land seen through the haze of preliminary romance, and even her observation of domestic life in John Hamilton's household had failed to dispel certain rose-tinted illusions. It was barely possible, however, that Sophie was conscious that the matrimonial yoke could gain a galling quality in the good-natured tyranny of a headstrong husband. In other happy women, a certain deftness in conciliating might have suggested the idea that this suave influence is of value in a life in which masculine temper, not being repressed in deference to a stringent professional system, may become a distinctly assertive element. It did not occur to Felicia to congratulate herself

that her husband regarded her *au grand sérieux*, — not as merely a dear soul, and in some sort humorously; or that he controlled his temper; or that his qualities of mind and heart were not, as in cousin Robert's case, merely an adjunct, in fastidious estimation, to personal peculiarities and eccentricities. Unluckily, she too took herself *au grand sérieux*; and for the rest, she had not thought to compare her husband with other men. Perhaps it would have been better if her standpoint had not been so lofty. Such a comparison is a prosaic process, but it has uses. She realized no palliations; to her the conditions were intolerable. She was very unhappy.

Her case suggests a puzzle. Have we one set of theories in principle, and another set for practice? Is it our expressed creed that the inmost self, which is made of emotions, principles, sentiments, that complex essence which we may call Soul, should in all right thinking and in all right action rise superior to Circumstance; and, in prosaic truth, is Circumstance lord of Soul?

*Fanny N. D. Murfree.*

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### A PLEA FOR TRUST.

My friend, do you believe I rate my soul  
As better than it is? Then let it be,  
Nor rob me of the nobler part of me.  
Better a half truth than a lying whole.  
I am that part I would myself conceive;  
'T is through such errors martyrs face the flame,  
Smiling, and keep down cowardice for shame,  
Since they in God and in *themselves* believe.

What is the Rose? 'T is not a thorny bush,  
But June incarnate bidding hearts rejoice;  
This small brown bird is not the woodland thrush,  
But all the summer's sweetness in a voice.

The soul's true self is that which closest lies  
To the dumb mighty heart whence all things rise.

*Lilla Cabot Perry.*