

finding his youth waiting for him amid the flowering sweetness of the garden within the green enclosure. He hesitated an instant, then with an impatient gesture, opened the gate and entered.

'How familiar it all was!—and how unchanged! As he glanced around he felt as if he were welcomed on every side by old friends, who stretched out cordial hands of greeting to him. The tall green hedges, the great flowering shrubs, the climbing roses—how piercingly full of recollection they all were, and how he could see Felicia, in her princess-like beauty and grace, coming to meet him down the rose-arched path! He forgot what had brought him there—forgot that he had come to repay his old suffering by making another suffer, to offer scorn where he had been scorned. He could only think of the Felicia whom he had loved so well and never forgotten, because she was not of the order of women whom men can forget.

And then, as if in a dream, he saw Felicia herself coming to meet him—with her delicate beauty untouched, so it seemed, by time. He caught his breath. Had the years rolled back and youth returned to him and to her? As she advanced and saw the tall figure awaiting her she too paused and uttered a low exclamation. Geoffrey! she cried—or, rather, breathed.

At the sound of that voice he stepped forward, and the next instant her hands were in his. 'Felicia!' he said; and so they stood, for a silent minute, looking at each other in the white moonlight. Then the man spoke again:

'Am I dreaming?' he asked. 'It seems incredible that I really find you here unchanged, in this old garden where we used to meet, and out of which I was cast as Adam out of Paradise. Felicia, have we died?—And is this heaven in the guise of earth?'

'No, Geoffrey,' the sweet tones for which his ears had so often thirsted, answered him, 'we have not died; and this is surely not heaven, for heaven holds no bitterness; and you—why are you here?'

He dropped her hands and drew back a step. 'You are right,' he said in a changed voice. 'I am here because of bitterness. I have come in place of another Geoffrey—a letter intended for him was by mistake delivered to me—to meet another Felicia, and repay the old scorn—'

She interrupted him. 'Was there ever scorn?' she asked.

'Not from you, never from you,' he answered quickly, 'but from others, yes. And so I have grasped the means of retaliation. As the Ravenels once refused alliance with me, so I now refuse alliance with them; and I am here to-night to tell the girl who bade my son meet her that if she marries him she will marry a man who has cut himself off from his family, even as your family once told you.'

'Yes,' said Miss Felicia gently, 'I see. And as you come to meet the other Felicia, so I came to meet the other Geoffrey and tell him—well, never mind what I meant to tell him! For, instead of what we intended, fate has set us two once more face to face, and I think it will be well that we shall tell each other how life has gone with us in the long years since we parted. Come—here is our old seat.'

She walked as she spoke over to the bench where she had sat with Fay a few hours earlier, and with a gesture of her hand summoned the man to a seat beside her. When he sat down she turned her beautiful eyes on him in an intent regard.

'You have changed very much,' she said, 'but I should have known you anywhere.'

'And you have changed hardly at all,' he answered, devouring her with his sombre gaze. 'It is as if one of the roses of that long past spring had been laid away and had never faded, only gained a deeper sweetness from time, which robs most things of sweetness. In God's name, Felicia, how have you done it?'

'If I have done it,' she answered, 'it has been by putting away from me everything which was not sweet, all memories of bitterness, all vain and enervating regrets for happiness which was denied. It is because I have lived like the roses, to which you are kind enough to liken me, in the sunshine, and tried to give back a little of it in fragrance.'

'A little,' he murmured. 'A little.' 'You see,' she went on, 'I could not do great things like you, neither serve the state in public life, nor accumulate wealth in enterprises, which have enriched many besides yourself. But I have watched your success from afar, and have been proud and glad of it.'

'Success!' he repeated—and in his voice now was a great bitterness. 'Do you know that what you call success has been to me little more than failure, because it has never given me one hour of satisfaction? Believe me or not, but since I left this garden in rage and dis-

appointment, when you told me that, being forced to choose between your family and me you chose your family, I have never known what happiness means.'

Then said Miss Felicia to him, as she had said to the girl who sat beside her in 'the morning': 'There are better things than happiness in the world, Geoffrey. The anger with which you left me was very sad, but perhaps it was a goad to make you accomplish things which you might else have left unaccomplished.'

'It was certainly that,' he agreed. 'I had not only to forget my sufferings and to forget you—for which purpose I plunged into work and gave myself hardy a moment in which to think—but I had also to fulfil my determination to make the Ravenels regret what they had done. I swore not only to rise so high that they would recognise the mistake they had made, but to gain power by which to injure them as they had injured me. And I have accomplished all that I promised myself. I have risen high, I have had power more than once to shut your brother out from political and business combinations which would have meant greater worldly prosperity for him had he been allowed to enter them—'

'Yes,' she assented quietly, 'I have heard him speak of that. Brett never forgets,' he said. 'I can always count on him as an implacable foe.'

'And then,' Brett went on, 'my son came one day and told me he wished to marry Felicia Ravenel.' He paused a moment. 'I can never tell you what I felt when I heard that name. All the past rushed back on me and I saw that fate had given me my chance to strike a last blow. So I told him that I would never consent to such a marriage and that if he persisted I should cut him off not only from association with me, but from any share in my fortune.'

'Well?' Miss Felicia's tone implied that there was no finality in this.

'Then—was it anger or was it pride in the father's tone?'—he told me that his word was given, and that while he was sorry to grieve and alienate me, he was bound, as man and as gentleman, to stand by it. There the matter rested until I learned yesterday that he had left for this place. I followed, determined that the Ravenels should at least know my exact position, and when I reached my hotel a note was put into my hands—a note which bade Geoffrey Brett be in the garden here to meet Felicia Ravenel.'

'And so, without any arrangement of yours or mine,' the woman beside him said, 'Geoffrey Brett and Felicia Ravenel have met to-night. Do you think that it has been for nothing?—or to give you an opportunity to express bitterness and repay, as you put it, scorn for scorn? No; I am quite sure that it was for something much better. It was, perhaps, that I might tell you that in the years since we parted I have learned a great deal in the garden here, where I have chiefly spent my life. And the best thing which I have learned is that strength comes from suffering and renunciation. It is like the pruning of the rose trees. One cuts them back severely, and for a time their bloom appears to be thwarted and stunted, but afterwards there comes the fuller, the more perfect, blooming. When I gave you up I seemed to cut away all the better part of myself, all the leafage and the flower of life, but you never understood that the force compelling me to this was not hate—but love.'

'Love, Felicia?'

(To be concluded next week.)

WITCH'S OIL.

A compound of soothing, massaging oils for rheumatic, sciatic, and other like pains. For cold weather aches—rheumatism, sciatica, and lumbago—it stands pre-eminent. WITCH'S OIL kills pain, and is the very best liniment in the world for all things a liniment ought to be good for. 2s 6d per bottle.

MYERS & CO., Dentists, Octagon, corner of George Street. They guarantee the highest class of work at moderate fees. Their artificial teeth give general satisfaction, and the fact of them supplying a temporary denture while the gums are healing does away with the inconvenience of being months without teeth. They manufacture a single artificial tooth for Ten Shillings, and sets equally moderate. The administration of nitrous oxide gas is also a great boon to those needing the extraction of a tooth.

Clergymen, lawyers, public speakers, teachers, and singers, can wonderfully tone and strengthen the vocal chords by taking teaspoonful doses of TUSSICURA, whenever needed.