

is the truth. Why did you deceive me? Why did you lie to me?

The girl raised her eyes to his face, and the awful sternness of it pierced her to the heart. The sight of those beloved eyes looking at her in such condemnation and reproach caused her to break down completely. She threw herself on her knees at his feet, crying:

'Felix, forgive me: I was so happy in your love that I banished the past from my mind—I just lived in the present. I deceived you, yes, Felix, though not wilfully, but I did not lie to you, as God is my Judge. I spoke the truth when I said no man had had his arms about me, nor had I kissed any man save my dear father!'

Sir Felix looked at her in wonderment, saying slowly: 'And yet you were married to that man?'

'And yet I was married to that man!' Ree repeated the words slowly and distinctly, and Sir Felix knew that she spoke the truth, and his heart rejoiced in the knowledge that he had not been mistaken in her purity. He raised her from her knees and said gently and humbly—all the harshness had left his voice:

'Child, who am I that I should have so judged you? The thought of my cup of happiness being dashed from my lips, unmanned me. I have been angry, forgive me—but my heart is broken, Ree. I cannot now marry you.'

'Felix, oh Felix!' she cried, a terrible distress appearing on her blanched face. 'Why not? There is no barrier—I divorced him, I am free.'

'Yes, free, child, as far as the law of the land can free you, but in the sight of God you are still that man's wife. I am a Catholic, and much as I love desire you I must obey the law of God.' Brokenly his voice sounded as he continued: 'We must part, little Ree. Far be it from me to wish any man dead, but until that man lies cold in his grave, I cannot marry you. Good-bye, Ree: God bless you, dear; no other woman can ever fill your place in my heart.' Then, looking pitifully at the drooping figure, so like a lily broken by the wind, he crushed her to him in a last fond embrace.

Sir Felix sought Lady Dexley: the sight of his haggard face shocked and alarmed her.

'Sir Felix,' she cried, in an agitated voice, 'something dreadful must have happened! Your face tells me so!'

'Yes, Lady Dexley, something dreadful has happened,' and in spite of his endeavors to appear calm, his voice shook with emotion as he related what had transpired between Ree and himself. 'Poor little one, I am afraid I was too harsh with her and judged her too hastily, but at the thought of losing her, the iron entered my heart, and I lost my self-control. Tell me, Lady Dexley, the circumstances which led to this marriage and divorce.'

Her ladyship proceeded to give him a brief outline of Ree's life, and then added: 'Do not think that she purposely concealed the facts of her marriage and divorce from you: the subject has never been mentioned by either of us since the first day of her arrival here, when I advised her to try and forget it entirely. Blame me for the deception, if you can so call it, not Ree; she is the soul of honor and is the essence of all that is good in a woman. I love her as a daughter, and my heart aches for her in this sorrow. You know how she loves you and delighted in your love for her!'

'Yes, Lady Dexley, her love for me makes things more difficult for her, and the parting harder to bear, but perhaps, one day, she will think with me and understand that marriage is out of the question while that man lives. Whatever happens now I shall never cease to love her. Comfort her and guard her, Lady Dexley; I dare not see her again. I know you will keep me informed of her welfare. Let me know what she arranges to do; tell her it will be best for her to go away for a time and take Ellen with her. She would dislike to feel herself the subject of gossip, and it will soon be known that our engagement is broken.'

Left to herself, Lady Dexley burst into tears. Her motherly heart was aching for the girl—poor child! What comfort could she offer her? Time alone would

soften the blow and heal the wound, but she must go to her.

She found Ree standing by the window where she had watched Sir Felix leave the house. She turned as Lady Dexley entered. Her dry, shining eyes told their own tale of wounded feelings—this sorrow had already changed her, from her laughing girlhood to a thoughtful womanhood. She was suffering keenly and finding it hard to bear.

'Child! Child!' cried poor Lady Dexley, 'this is a terrible blow for you, and again I must reproach myself for the part I have taken. If I had not advised you to keep silent, you would have told Sir Felix in the beginning of your friendship, and then there would never have been any engagement. I must own, in justice to myself, that I never thought of his religion: had I done so, I should have confided in him, as he would have guarded your secret.'

'You must not reproach yourself, dear Lady Dexley. Whatever happened, it would not have altered the fact of our love. Tranner, in her thirst for revenge at her disappointment in not securing some of my money, has done good, for I can understand now that if it had not come to Felix's knowledge until after our marriage, the parting would have been worse. I have one ray of comfort, and that is however much Felix may blame me for my silence, he will always love me, and who knows but that he may yet call me wife!'

'Ree, you are a brave girl, and are taking this better than I expected, though I know how keenly you feel about it.'

'So keenly, Lady Dexley, that if I had not that little ray of comfort to solace me, I should feel utterly despondent and break down completely. Ellen's words to me when we were at the seaside keep ringing in my ears: "May your future troubles glide off your back as easily as your past ones have done!" Good soul, I laughed at her then: I see now the wisdom of her words. There are some troubles one cannot laugh away, and this is one of them, but I will try to bear it bravely and cling to the hope that I may yet be Felix's wife.'

'Surely, Ree, you do not wish that man dead?'

'No, no, Lady Dexley, I can honestly say I have no evil thought towards him. He was a man led away by a bad woman, and I, feeble creature that I was, should have resisted his persuasions. I do not blame him entirely, and I must own I have scarcely ever given him a thought, so happy have I been!'

'Sir Felix suggested your going away for a time, Ree.'

'Yes, I have been thinking about doing so, and have already planned in my mind what I shall do. I shall go with Ellen to the convent for a few months at least. Mother Victoire will take me as a parlor boarder, and I shall be free to go about. I could not mix in society again just yet—without Felix. It would be more than I could bear. I should miss him too much, and I should find the separation unendurable.'

(To be concluded.)

We can bear and do anything we have to if we try, and until we do try most of us have no idea how much we can bear and do.

SYMPATHY.

If there is one person who deserves sympathy it is surely he who suffers from chronic colds. A sudden change in the weather or going out into the night air from a heated room, is quite enough to bring on the trouble. Usually the tendency to catch cold is due to a generally run-down condition, and the treatment should take the form of a tonic like BAXTER'S LUNG PRESERVER. It is pleasant to take, gives sure results, and is quite harmless; for children and adults you cannot find a better cough or cold remedy. 1/10 a bottle from all chemists and stores, or by post direct. J. BAXTER & CO.,—CHRISTCHURCH.