

Then it was that the 'good lady' began to come to see her. How or when she learned of her illness Mary did not know. She knew only that she awoke from a long, feverish sleep to find the kind face of the doctor bending over her, and the 'good lady' standing at the foot of her cot. She came every day after that, and often cared for her several hours at a time. Mary loved her; and often, often watched her from under her half-closed lids, marvelling at the fervor with which she would slip on her knees and say her beads, and wondering why her sweet, thoughtful face was so sad. Surely, starvation was not staring her in the face! Surely she had no husband grown sullen, morose, wicked; and without these woes, Mary thought, why should anyone be sorrowful.

Even Peter loved the 'good lady.' He was not unlike his old gay self when he chanced to be at home and she was there. Perhaps it was because she treated him as she would have treated a gentleman, because she expected courtesy as well as gave it. Even when, as happened once or twice, he gave expression in her presence to his hatred of the rich and the powerful, even then she was all gentleness and compassion; though she talked to him seriously and sternly about this Socialism which Mary had instinctively known to be wrong.

A month passed. Mary was slowly struggling back to health, almost happy because her husband had been a little more gentle of late, and once or twice had even teased her as he used to love to do. But one Saturday afternoon when Peter and his friends went to the saloon as usual, they were refused further credit. They strolled away, feigning indifference; and gathered in a knot at the nearest corner talked in whispers, gesticulating menacingly. One uncouth fellow—Adam, they called him—always a leader among them, drew a sensation-colored picture of the gay, easy life led by Mr. Morrison, the president of the steel plant, and artfully contrasted it with the squalor into which he had thrust them, or at least allowed them to fall. He went farther, and did what none of them had ever dared to do before; he advocated revenge—revenge, in the shape of death.

Peter was roused to a state of frenzy. He approved of all Adam said, and declared himself ready to do the deed. Nor was Adam loathe to yield him the honor. He was far more daring in word than in action, as other men have been before and since.

An hour later Peter was hanging about an elegant mansion. Inside his threadbare coat a revolver was concealed. There he waited and watched, nursing his anger on the thought of his wrongs. Dusk fell, and the early winter darkness, and still he waited. At length an automobile came and stood before the house; the door opened, and the man whom he sought appeared. Peter glanced fearfully about him. There was no one in sight, but he decided to wait until his victim was seated in the automobile before he fired at him, and then make his escape in the friendly darkness.

Mr. Morrison came down the steps—and his wife was with him. Peter was a little disconcerted to see her. He wished her far away. It would be bitterly hard on her, he realised, with the first pang his heart had felt that day. Mr. and Mrs. Morrison reached the foot of the steps, passed through the gate, and came close to him; and Peter looked at the wife rather than at him, wondering vaguely where he had seen her face before.

Mrs. Morrison chanced to glance at the shabby figure pressed close against the fence; and to Peter's amazement a smile of recognition brightened her face, and she held out her daintily gloved hand, saying cordially:

'How do you do, Mr. Barzynski? And how is your wife?'

Then Peter saw that Mrs. Morrison was the 'good lady.'

'She—she's better,' he managed to falter.

Mr. Morrison had been giving some directions to the chauffeur, but when he turned to his wife, she said, 'John, this is Peter Barzynski, one of your old men. You remember, I told you about him and his sick wife.'

Mr. Morrison, a stout, pleasant-faced man, much older than his wife, shook Peter's hand in the friendliest way possible: a minute more, and he and Mrs. Morrison had stepped into their automobile and were gone; and Peter stood watching the car disappear in the distance, his right hand resting limply against his revolver.

Long, long, he stood there, remorse and horror little by little filtering into the depths of his soul, as he realised what he had been about to do. He thought of all Mrs. Morrison's kindness to his wife, and of the sorrow with which he had almost repaid it. He thought of the grief he had nearly caused his patient Mary. He thought of the fearsome death penalty he must have faced had he done the deed; and this thought recalled the still more awful punishment awaiting crime in the world to come. His faith was not dead.

In an agony of terror and remorse Peter turned away from Mr. Morrison's house, and wandered through the streets, face to face with his own sin-stained soul; hating himself; and loathing the odious doctrines which had enslaved and deceived him. He resolved to repudiate them, and to avoid their advocates. Still the future showed no gleam of hope to guide or cheer him. He was out of work; he was penniless; he was about to add, friendless as well, when there stole into his embittered soul the sweet remembrance of One Friend Who is ever true, ever loving, every ready to forgive.

The magic of the thought calmed him, and stumbling across a church in his aimless rambling, he tiptoed in. Straight to the altar steps he went, and prayed there fervently, but not for long, as they pray who are in earnest, but unaccustomed to the language of their fatherland. It was only a few minutes after he first entered the church that he went and stood beside a confessional, waiting for the penitent within to give him his place.

The minutes passed, and Peter, growing tired, allowed his eyes to wander curiously over the great, hushed spaces. Presently he discovered that the woman who knelt before Our Lady's altar was Mrs. Morrison, and with a kind of awe he watched her upturned face, and noted that it was smiling as he had never seen it smile before.

At last there was a slight rustle within the confessional, the curtain was pushed aside—and Peter fell back a step when Mr. Morrison came out, pale and a little tremulous, and going forward knelt beside his wife at Our Lady's feet. A moment more, and Peter was on his knees in his master's place.

On the following Monday morning Peter and the other men who had been discharged from the steel plant, because by driving those who remained a little harder it was possible to do without them, were reinstated in their old places. A few weeks later their pitilessly long working day was shortened; and before long their wages were advanced a little. Mary Barzynski learned to smile again; and as for Peter, the money in his pocket and the peace in his heart taught him to laugh and to pray as he had not done for many a weary month.

And there was a soul saintly and detached amid horrible luxury, and a heart filled with love for one who had long wandered from the fold in his greedy quest for wealth, which overflowed at last with the joy as well as the peace which passeth understanding.—*Florence Gilmore, in Extension.*

---

Excess of Uric Acid in the blood is responsible for many of the ills that flesh is heir to. Rheumatism, Rheumatism, Gout, Sciatica and Lumbago are all due to excess Uric Acid. Hence the only way to secure relief is to purge the excess from the system. RHEUMO does this—it removes the cause and a cure rapidly follows. Chemists and stores 2/6 and 4/6 per bottle.

---

WANTED KNOWN—That Bill-heads, Circulars, Memoriam Cards, Concert Tickets and Programmes, and General Printing of every description are executed at the *Tablet Office*. Moderate rates.