

Love Finds A Way.

BY JEANNETTE H. WALWORTH.

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(Continued.)

"I must condense into a paragraph what I had hoped to distill into your young mind through many years of happy and loving intercourse. Use your wealth. Do not let it misuse you. Remember that riches take flight often in the most unforeseen fashion. I can at this time foresee no contingency that would reduce you to the estate of a poor man; but, should such a catastrophe befall, God grant that your brains and your hands may prove good substitutes for lands and stocks. During your minority your affairs will be managed by my lifelong friend, Horace Matthews, in whose business capacity I have great confidence. But no man should yield blindly to the guidance of another. Bear in mind that your responsibilities are your own, to be shouldered, not shirked, to be borne by no one but yourself.

"I desire you on the day of your majority to take the management of your affairs into your own hands, subject, of course, to advice from your guardian. You will owe it to yourself to obtain a clear insight into the management of affairs during your minority. No honest steward will object to this accounting. As for your guardian, while I trust him implicitly—"

Tom turned the paper over impatiently. Surely there must be something more. Not an added syllable! Where had this unfinished letter, so precious and so all important, been found? Who had conveyed it to his hands?

He had himself searched every drawer and every compartment of his father's desk and found nothing. He had questioned Mr. Matthews with querulous insistence, only to be assured by him that his father had left nothing for him personally in writing, and yet here, twisted ruthlessly about the stems of flowers which came no one knew whence, were his father's last, most precious utterances of advice and love.

He folded the piece of twisted paper into proper shape and laid it away in an inner pocket of his waistcoat. The flowers which he had crushed under his heels sent up a sickly fragrance. A strong gust of wind set his candle aflame. It guttered and died out suddenly, only to add to his sense of shuddering isolation. He could have cried aloud for human companionship, for the sound of a fellow creature's voice. He bethought him of the friendly watchers down stairs.

On second thoughts he should not like to face his father's faithful friends with white lips and trembling limbs. He would quiet his nerves by spending a few moments in his father's own room. Amid its familiar surroundings he could relight his candle and regain his lost self control. He passed through the connecting door into the larger room so intimately associated with his beloved dead.

By the mantelshelf there used to be always a supply of matches. That same faint, receding radiance puzzled him as he drew aside the curtains that separated his own room from his father's. Some one must have left a window open on the balcony. A cold puff of outside air greeted and chilled him as he stepped over the threshold, but by this time he had himself well in hand. He found the matches and relighted his candle.

It was not his first visit to his father's room. He had gone there

straightway on his agonized home coming. It was there he had wrestled with the first sharp pangs of his bereavement, kneeling by the bed and clamoring piteously for one word of recognition from its pale and unresponsive sleeper.

He had passed through it since when it had looked decorously desolate, with the cold, white, tenantless bed and its handsome furnishings pitifully set to



His mother's Bible was open.

rights. On neither one of those previous visits had he observed the conspicuous object that now arrested his attention immediately on entering the room.

His mother's Bible, the one out of which he had read his Sunday's task, an unwilling little rebel, many a weary Sabbath afternoon at his father's knee, was propped upon the center table under the dimly burning radiance of a night taper. It was open. A single blossom of white cosmos marked the passage:

"Put not your trust in princes nor in any son of man."

He did not reason about the presence of the Bible. He did not cast a second look at it. Whether he was to brand himself everlastingly as a coward did not cost him one anxious thought. He descended the long spiral stairs that divided him from human companionship with feet that seemed to have suddenly grown old and very tired. The distance between him and the living seemed to stretch out interminably. He was at one only with death and mystery.

With cowering aspect he crept into the long parlor where his father lay in lonely state. One look at the noble, calm face within the casket covered him with a sense of littleness and confusion.

"Father, father! To think that I should know fear in your presence—you, who had such high scorn for cowardice and cowards! I am not worthy to be called your son!"

A voice came to him in greeting from the other end of the long room. It was old Mr. Braddock, who had insisted upon sitting up with his old friend Rufus. He shuffled toward the young mourner now with a face from which every vestige of color had fled. He nodded nervously toward his three companions, who came in a slow procession in his rear.

"These gentlemen and I have been going over the premises, Thomas, to see if any doors or windows had been left open. It grew quite chilly suddenly." The old man rubbed his hands nervously about each other.

"Quite so," the man nearest his right elbow echoed.

"We distinctly felt a cold puff of air," the man on his left added.

"Some window open on the veranda," Thomas suggested.

"We have made a thorough inspection. We find neither door nor window left unbolts. But the house is very large and very drafty."

"The library may have been overlooked."

Tom glanced toward the heavy chenille portieres that fell between the parlor and the library. On the other side of them were the folding doors, paneled with ground glass, which gave the soft effectiveness of moonlight when lights burned on the library side.

Emboldened by the manifest fears of his companions, he drew the curtains and fell backward with a low cry. Then indignation smothered his fear.

"Some one in the library, standing at my father's desk."

He essayed to slide the glass doors backward into their sockets. They would not yield.

"I locked them myself from the li-

brary side," said Mr. Braddock chatteringly. "I did not want any one to intrude here without our permission or knowledge." He glanced toward the casket.

"Then we must go around by the middle parlor," said Tom curtly.

He led the way hurriedly. The older men kept pace with him valiantly. With their own scandalized eyes they had corroborated the boy's startled announcement that his father's desk was being tampered with.

A dim light showed through the ground glass doors. A stooping figure was plainly discernible in front of the large table in the center of the study, the table at which Tom had seen his father sit through what seemed to his childish fancy interminable hours of pen work.

A smaller door to the study was reached by the circuitous passage of the drawing room suit. It yielded to Tom's impatient touch upon its knob and opened inward—upon a room wrapped in utter darkness!

"Have any of you matches?" he asked sharply.

Three matches were responsively struck against as many boot heels, and the room was soon well lighted.

Scattered in reckless confusion over the open desk were papers that had been hastily drawn out from the pigeonholes for inspection, by whom and for what purpose were the mysteries that confronted Thomas and his friends.

"This passes comprehension," said old man Braddock, with tremulous utterance and protuberant eyes. "The study was in perfect order when I locked that door on this side. Rufus would turn in his coffin at such disarray. He was so very orderly."

"Some one has been tampering with my father's papers for purposes of his own. Will you help me search the house for the miscreant, my friends? I should like just to discover the place of ingress and egress. After we have found it we can search the house inside thoroughly."

(To be Continued.)

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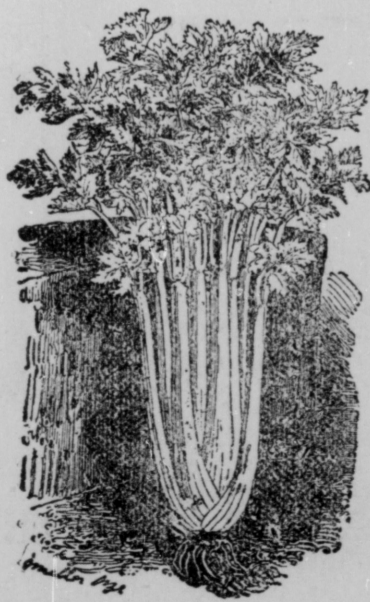
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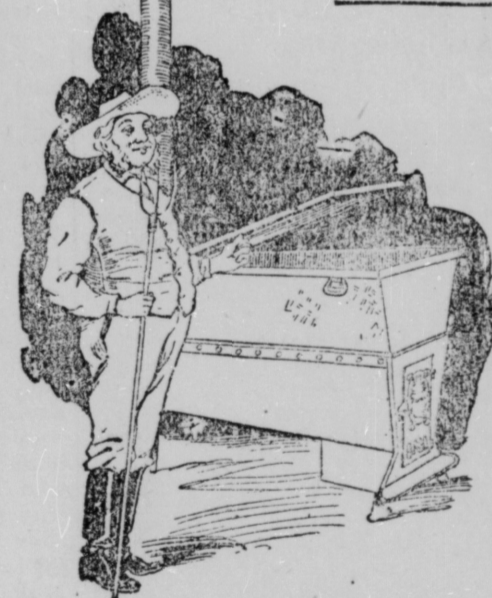
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Leaves for the west.....	4 10 p. m.
Arrives from the west.....	6 00 p. m.
Leaves for the west.....	10 55 a. m.
Arrives from the west.....	2 25 p. m.
Leaves for the east.....	7 05 a. m.
Arrives from the east.....	9 10 a. m.
Leaves for the east.....	3 00 p. m.
Arrives from the east.....	4 50 p. m.

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