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SELECTED STORY.

BIRTH OR WORTH?

BY A—.

"You do not heed me, Vievie, do you not hear me?" Vincent Du Chesne impatiently grasped the small white hands that were pulling away leaf after leaf of the hazel beside them, and looked almost fiercely into the deep, dreamy blue eyes that were raised to his.

"You have been gazing at nothing for the last half hour, while I have been telling you—Heaven knows what I have been saying, but it came far short of what I want to say. Did you hear one word I said?"

"I have been listening, Vincent, but you know what a habit I have of dreaming—you must learn all my faults now, before it is everlastingly too late," laughingly answered Vievie Layne, as she coaxingly slipped her hands in his.

"I could never dream while you were talking, Vievie. Oh! I want you all my own—I want to see you once with your thoughts all on me, your eyes seeing only me, your ears only for my words, and your voice for me alone. Then I would grasp the happiness that now only trembles tauntingly just beyond my reach."

"I shall begin to think I am insufficient for your happiness, if you talk in that way. I have promised all a woman can promise, and if that does not make you happy, it is beyond my power to make you so."

"You know I should be utterly miserable without you, and must be content if you assure me you love me, though you are so dreamy and indifferent at times."

"That is right, Vincent. Try and endure my words and caprices patiently, for they are numerous, I warn you."

They turned and walked homeward. Vievie fell to dreaming again, and Vincent silently and gloomily watched her.

They were engaged—those two. You would scarce have thought it possible, to look at them: she was such a noble, beautiful woman, with such a pure, strong soul beaming from her eyes, and a broad, white brow so expressive of intelligence,—he was so young, so boyish, so childishly impetuous and impatient, so extremely fastidious in all the little details of dress, and with such a little, petty vanity showing through all his actions, that you could not help but notice how utterly unsuited they seemed to each other.

Vievie thought she loved him—perhaps she did. But it was not the love you would have expected from a strong, ardent nature like hers. She had known Vincent from childhood, and liked him better than any one she had ever known. He was refined and educated and romantic, and his fanciful little air castles, and his sweet, dreamy sentimentalism charmed and amused her, while his gallant, devoted love-making was done so prettily that she felt flattered and fascinated. And then he was so wealthy, and he belonged to one of the best families and was one of the matches of the city, and so Vievie concluded she loved him and became duly engaged.

But still she was conscious that there was something lacking. Somehow his flattering, ardent love-talk did not make her as happy as she supposed she would be—indeed she was becoming a little tired of his ceaseless adoration and longed for something—she knew not what. She concluded that a real country visit—not a journey to some fashionable rural resort; but a long visit to a real old country farm-house, away from fashion and show and dazzle, and among the hills and streams and clover and meadows of real country life—would refresh and enliven mind and body. So she bethought herself of a friend of her mother's away out among the hills and valleys—a good motherly soul who would kindly care for her during her sojourn. And so Vievie had recommended to Vincent a little more attention to his neglected law books, and left him disconsolately among them. But one week's separation doomed the law books to dust and neglect and found

Vincent tied to Vievie's side again. And this is how they happened to be on the banks of a swift, beautiful river away out in the country that lovely summer afternoon.

As they neared home Vievie looked up, started and blushed, then glanced quickly at Vincent to see if he had noticed her; she saw that he had, and bit her lip with vexation. Vincent looked around to see what could have caused her confusion, but saw no one excepting a farm laborer who was shutting the gate after the cows he had driven in.

"What is it, darling? Are you not well?" he asked tenderly.

"I am a little tired, that is all," she answered quietly.

"And now, dear Vievie," said Vincent holding the gate open for her, "I must say good-bye again. I wish the time were come when I should never have to say good-bye."

She smiled a little wearily, perhaps, and simply said "good-bye."

"I must see you again before I go back to the city, Vievie. Good-bye."

As soon as the gate clicked upon her departing lover, Vievie ran up stairs, threw herself upon the bed and burst into an angry fit of sobbing.

"What a silly, wicked, unreasonable little fool I am," she exclaimed passionately.

"What does all me, I wonder? That that common farm laborer, whom I never saw till a week ago, and with whom I have never had above two hours conversation in my life, should make me blush and tremble so ridiculously, is perfectly—awful!" said she at last for some terrible word with which to express her vexation. But she sobbed on till the gold faded from the clouds, and the sky grew dark, and heavy shadows came settling over the room. She scarcely knew for what—weariness, loneliness, vexation—altogether perhaps.

Frank Wyman, "the common farm laborer," was a nephew of Mrs. Stanhope's (the lady at whose house Vievie was boarding) orphaned from his childhood and her sole care. She had given him a good education, which he had just completed, and now he had come home to enjoy a summer on his aunt's farm, as only he with his love of nature and freedom, could enjoy it. He had donned the laborer's suit, and had gone to work with zest that made rest and sleep, and Mrs. Stanhope's good substantial meals, true luxuries. But Vievie only knew that Frank Wyman, one of the field hands. Yes, she knew that among all her many admirers, she had never seen so tall, vigorous and manly a form, so high and noble a brow, or such deep, thrilling, soul-speaking eyes. But, pshaw! what was all that to her—he was only a poor, country farm-hand, not even a farmer.

The weeks passed on like a fairy dream. Vincent would flit back and forth from city to country, like an idle butterfly that he was. Vievie spent the time between his visits in walking, riding, or sailing on the river with Frank too often her companion. Yes, too often, for unconsciously she was beginning to love, to listen to his quiet, earnest conversation, to watch his changing expressive eyes, and his calm, respectful manner towards her. Always distant but courteous, he had never shown that he thought her more than a mere passing acquaintance; and so Vievie, unalarmed by any action of his, dreamed on, and innocently believed her heart true to Vincent. Her whole life that idle, dreamy summer was like a dream in which she took no part but glided unconsciously along with it.

But an awakening came at last. Vincent had been down and had been more impetuous, impulsive and boyish than ever, urging her to a speedy union and declaring that he could not live without her. At last she had promised, and his rhapsodies had been so persistent and passionate, that his departure was a relief. And now she sat at her window watching that old yet ever new—ever beautiful scene—a sunset, and looking her future steadily in the face.

"Why is it that I dread my marriage-day so much? Do all young girls on the eve of a new life, feel so reluctant, I wonder?" she mused, and then the name of Frank trembled on her lips. "No, not him! Never him," she said resolutely, while her compressed lips and face slowly paled till they looked cold and still, like marble. "A country laborer! A peasant's farm-hand! I love him? Never!" Then the words she had somewhere read rang faintly through her brain:

"I do not love thee, no, I do not love thee, I do not, though a smothered thrill quickens the beating of my heart when thou art near me,

A quick strong beating that I cannot still."

Then she pictured Frank as belonging to another, as being lost to her entirely; with one great heart bound and one tearless sob, she sank upon the floor. "O I do love him! God help me! I love him and am bound to another! I love him unasked and unloved in return!"

Tears came to her relief and she wept long and bitterly. Then with a prayer to Heaven for help to do her duty, she arose composed and resolute and proceeded to pack up her possessions. "I must go home and the sooner I am—married the better, for as the wife of Vincent I cannot, will not think of another. One more evening with dear good Mrs. Stanhope, one more visit to the loved scenes around Valley Farm—and then good-bye to them all forever. Oh Frank, Frank, can I ever forget you? This happy, blissful summer with you will ever be green in my memory. Oh, that I could forget." The tears sprang again to her eyes but she fiercely brushed them away.

Vincent was there again the next day, and together they wandered over all the walks and stopped at last close to the river's edge. The river was deep with a swift, strong current, and Vievie had often stood gazing into its dark, gloomy depths, dreaming for hours; now she bent over them silently scarcely hearing Vincent's passionate words. Just across the path in the next field were the haymakers, and among them she easily distinguished Frank by his tall symmetrical form and his easy, graceful motions. Fix her eyes determined as she would, upon the water, they would wander to him, and had Vincent known how far her thoughts were from what he was saying, he would have been more impatient and reproachful than ever. But Vievie was growing so weary of his ceaseless homage, and a fancy seized her to see how far down she could look into the clear water of the river. There was an old tree near them that had fallen with its top far into the stream. Out upon that she climbed, as far as she could go, spite of Vincent's entreaties, and lightly leaning over the old bough, she gazed down, down into clear swift waters. But the old decayed limbs could not bear up even her slender form, and swaying and trembling a few moments they fell with a crash and left Vievie struggling in the cold river. She grasped one limb after another, but they all gave way and she gave up in despair. Meanwhile Vincent was delivering a series of frightened yells, running up and down the bank, and jumping in and out of the river, and finally pulling off his "beautifully fitting boots" and laying them carefully on the log. He was just deciding to wade out a little way into the water, when Frank Wyman bounded past him and plunged into the river. Some of the harvest hands started for a boat a quarter of a mile up stream, others stood hopelessly with Vincent on the bank. But Frank rapidly swam toward the spot where Vievie had sunk, and grasped her firmly just as she arose. He struck out vigorously for the shore, but the swift, strong current carried him farther and farther down the stream, and spite of all his efforts, burdened as he was, he could not get near the bank. His only hope was that he could keep up till the boat came; but at last he despaired even of that.

"Oh Vievie, I cannot save you. God help us we must die together." "Leave me and save yourself," said Vievie faintly. "Never! Oh darling! with death so close it cannot be wrong to tell you how

passionately I love you! Vievie! Vievie, one word! Oh God, she is dead!" But she was not dead, only exhausted. One faint smile, one low whisper, "I love you," and her senses left her. With a new strength in his arms, and a new hope in his heart, he exerted himself once more, and with almost superhuman effort kept Vievie and himself above water till the boat came, and they were lifted almost lifeless into it.

Ceaseless and untiring care at last restored them both. Vincent, was bending over Vievie with passionate extravagant exclamations, and praying her to live for him, when she came to herself.

"Vincent, if my life was not worth to you the risking of your own to save it, you cannot have it. It is useless to say more; henceforth you are nothing to me." No entreaties or excuses could prevail; and Vincent departed from the country a sadder and a wiser man.

Vievie returned home soon to make preparations for her coming bridal day—but she did not make them reluctantly this time. Whatever may have been her thoughts of marrying a "poor farm-hand" once, she is to-day proud of her noble, intelligent farmer-husband.

AN ACT for the Protection and Preservation of Useful Animals.

SECTION 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina, now met and sitting in General Assembly, and by the authority of the same:

That it shall not be lawful for any person in this State to kill any deer or worry them with dogs or otherwise, with the intention of destroying them, between the 1st day of January and the 1st day of September, in any year hereafter.

SEC. 2. That any person violating the foregoing provision of this act shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined not less than twenty dollars, or be imprisoned not less than twenty days, which fine, if imposed, shall be recoverable before any court of competent jurisdiction; one-half thereof shall go to the informer, and the other half thereof to the school fund of the said county.

SEC. 3. That any person in whose possession recently killed venison or fresh deer skins shall be found, between the dates above mentioned, shall be liable to the same penalty as those violating section 2 of this act.

SEC. 4. That it shall not be lawful for any person in this State, between the 15th day of February and the 15th day of October, in any year hereafter, to catch kill or injure, or to pursue with such intent, or to sell, or expose for sale, any wild turkey, partridge, dove, woodcock, snipe or pheasant; and any person found guilty thereof shall be fined not less than ten dollars, or be imprisoned not less than ten days, which fine, if imposed, shall go, one-half thereof to the informer and the other half thereof to the school fund of the county where the offense was committed.

SEC. 5. That it shall not be lawful for any person in this State to wantonly shoot, or entrap, for the purpose of killing, or in any other manner destroy any bird whose principal food is insects, or take or destroy the eggs or young of any of the species or varieties of birds that are protected by the provisions of this act, comprising all the species and varieties of birds represented by the several families swallows, bats, whippoorwills, fly catchers, thrashers, warblers, finches, larks, orioles, nut hatchers, woodpeckers, humming birds, mocking birds, blue birds, red birds and robins, and all other species and varieties of land birds, whether great or small, of every description, regarded as harmless in their habits, and whose flesh is unfit for food, including the turkey buzzard, but excluding the jackdaw, the crow, the crow blackbird, and eagle and all hawks and owls which prey upon other birds; and any person violating the provisions of this section shall, on conviction thereof, forfeit and pay a fine of ten dollars, or be imprisoned not less than ten days, which fine, if imposed, shall go, one-half to the informer, and the other half to the school fund of the county in which the offense was committed; Provided,

That no person shall be prevented from protecting any crop of fruit or grain on his own lands from the depredations of any birds herein intended to be protected.

SEC. 6. Whenever a person shall have made or created an artificial pond on his own land, and shall put therein any fish, or the eggs of any fish or oyster, for the purpose of breeding and cultivating fish or oysters, and shall give notice thereof by written or printed handbills, put up in public places near said pond; and any person who shall thereafter enter in or about such pond for the purpose of fishing, or shall catch or take away any fish or oysters therefrom, or shall be guilty of committing any trespass upon any artificial fish pond by fishing in the same, or in any manner using any means to destroy the fish or oysters raised or collected in such pond, or by breaking the dam or dams for the purpose of permitting the fish or oysters to escape, or by poisoning the same, or in any manner destroying or injuring the same; and any such persons, upon conviction, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be subject to a fine of not less than twenty dollars nor more than one hundred dollars, or be imprisoned, at the discretion of the court; which fine, if imposed, shall go, one half thereof to the informer, and the other half thereof to the person or persons whose property shall have been injured: Provided, That nothing in this section shall be construed as to apply to ponds used as water power for manufacturing purposes.

SEC. 7. That it shall not be lawful for any person in this State, after the 1st day of April, (1872), to take any trout from the streams thereof, by impregnating the waters with poisonous or deleterious substances; and any person violating this provision shall, upon conviction thereof, be fined ten dollars for every such offense, or be imprisoned not less than ten days, which fine, if imposed, shall go, one-half to the informer, and the other half to the school fund of the county in which such offense shall have been committed.

SEC. 8. This act shall take effect from and after its passage.

Approved March 12th, 1872.

AN ACT to Regulate the issuing of Checks to Laborers upon Plantations and Elsewhere.

SECTION 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina, now met and sitting in General Assembly, and by the authority of the same:

That unless otherwise provided by special contract, it shall be, and it is hereby, required of all persons who employ laborers upon plantations or elsewhere by the day, week, month or year, to pay such laborers or employees in United States bank notes or fractional currency.

SEC. 2. That if any person or persons, after the passage of this act, shall offer to any laborer or employee, except as provided for in the preceding section, as compensation for labor or services performed, check or scrip of any description in lieu of United States bank notes or fractional currency, the said person or persons so offending shall be liable to indictment and punishment by a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding twenty days or both, according to the discretion of the court. Provided, That the word checks in this act shall not be construed so as to prohibit the giving of checks upon any of the authorized banks of deposit or issue in this State.

SEC. 3. All acts or parts of acts inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed.

Approved March 13, 1872.

EFFECT OF FROST ON PLANTS.—It has been a disputed question whether plants killed by frost die in freezing or in thawing. That the former is the case, at least in some cases, has been satisfactorily demonstrated by Professor Goppert, of Breslau. The flowers of certain orchids, produce indigo, but only by a chemical reaction that takes place upon the death of the parts. When they are crushed or the vitality of the cells is otherwise destroyed, they turn blue at once. Now this change of color occurs immediately upon freezing, which proves that the life then ceases. Certain other species are said to show the same thing.—Boston Journal of Chemistry.