

THE BABY.

BY J. W. RILEY.

O, this is the way the baby came:
Out of the night as comes the dawn;
Out of the bud the blossom's on,
The apple-bough that blooms the same—
As in glad summer dead and gone—
With a grace and beauty none could name—
O, this is the way the baby came!

And this is the way the baby slept:
And when in deepest drops of dew,
The shine and shadows sink in soak,
The sweet eyes glimmered through and
And the drowsings and dimples broke
About the lips, and no one knew
Or could divine the words they spoke—
And that is the way the baby slept!
Indianapolis Journal.

LILITH.

BY LILY M. CURRY.

And round his heart one strangling golden hair!

The keen wind, rising ever at the sea inlet and sweeping its breezy circuit around through the old town and up the sandy, level road, swept with a merry party that August morning, up from the railroad station to the summer home of Harold Swain. The latter, a youngish man—a widower of six years' standing, long relapsed into the happy habits of bachelorhood—had come down from the city, bringing with him friends to remain one week, or two, or ten, as they should please. Not all were of old acquaintance; only his trusted Lester Chapples, who had introduced him to the others, all ladies, and specifically, as follows: Theodosia Wells, a vivacious blonde, widow with a tender recollection of "poor Jack," who would go shooting in a boat on Sunday, in spite of all she could say, and so had met his death; Miss Meigs, the elderly chaperon of the set, a little inclined to lace mittens and dawdling; and Miss Meigs' niece, Lilith Francillon. Harold Swain had met Miss Francillon but twice before this, and as they walked up together from the station he said to himself she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Nevertheless, had any one called him aside and asked him to describe her, he might have hesitated, uncertain of the hue of those changeable eyes, the shifting glances of sunlight in that reddish hair, the flushed deepening or paling in that pure, sweet face. Glancing from time to time at the lovely profile and loosely twisted hair under her seaside bonnet, with its careless droop of sailor-blue feathers, its knot of violet velvet, he wondered how Lester could prefer the gay banter of the little widow and the prim wisdom of the elderly chaperon. But Lester, he admitted, was bearish at times, in spite of his good looks, his fortune, and his excellent connections. The fact that Miss Francillon was an heiress should not detract from her loveliness. Was she not ever modest and deferent?

Harold had not kept silence while thinking these things. He had spoken of what they should do for amusement.

"Did you ever catch a bluefish, Miss Francillon? I mean a good-sized one. Because I've got the best little boat you ever saw. Captain George runs it for me. It is the 'Mary Jane' at present, 't'nt I would like to change the name, if I thought a young lady wouldn't object to a boat for a namesake."

Lilith swung her parasol lightly over her arm, and laughed her own musical mezzo.

"I should think any young lady would be delighted with the compliment. I'm sure I would."

"Would you?" he asked, seriously. And now the others, who had lagged, came hurrying after, the lively widow entreating Lilith to go more slowly and to enjoy the morning.

"But I am enjoying it, Theo." Miss Francillon answered, earnestly, pausing as she spoke, and lifting her gaze to the leafy canopy of the old street.

Harold Swain remembered ever after how she looked, standing there, her red, sweet lips parted slightly, quick rose tints flashing into those fairest cheeks, and golden varying lights in the wide eyes.

They went on presently, up into the cool width of the rambling old seaside house, where the cheerful housekeeper waited to welcome them.

"We are all here, Martha," said Harold, laughing pleasantly. "You might let the ladies choose their own rooms. They will want those looking seaward. Mr. Chapples will have the one you always give him," and, turning to his friend, "Come, Lester, we'll go right up."

He went into the room with Chapples and shut the door.

"You know the ways of the house, Lester," he said. "Do as you please; come and go as you like. I wish you'd insist on the ladies sending for their baggage. I don't want them running away in twenty-four hours; and that's women all over, if they haven't all their toggeries at hand."

"You're very good, Harold. I'll use my influence if I have any." Chapples was plunging his blonde, handsome face into a bowl of raw water and mopping it, in man fashion, with a damask towel.

"How do you like them?"

"Very much. The little widow is extremely fascinating, as you, of course, acknowledge; the aunt is a virtue born of a necessity, and Miss Francillon is the most beautiful woman I ever —" He stopped and went to the door where Martha was knocking to inquire about Lilith.

Meanwhile, the ladies, having brought no luggage, could only wash away the suggestion of coal-smoke, indulge in a suspicion of fine powder, and descend to the parlor.

"Mr. Swain has a taste for art," said Miss Meigs. "Lilith, my dear, come and see these engravings."

"Yes, presently, aunt." Miss Francillon was surveying her sailor-blue costume in the narrow length of gilt-framed pier-glass. Theodosia was interested in the life-size portrait of a blonde young lady over the piano.

"Lil, come and look at this picture. I suppose it is his wife. Dear me! I

wonder if it makes him as sad as poor Jack's makes me!"

"I don't care to look at dead people," Lilith answered, regardlessly.

"You shock me, dear. Let us go out on the piazza. Will you come, Miss Meigs?"

"I think not, thank you. I'm tired enough to stay indoors." Miss Meigs was remarkably easy-going for chaperon. There was no need to bother these sensible girls two or three and twenty years. She made herself comfortable in a wooden rocker, while they slipped away through the long window and indulged in girlish, gossipy confidences.

"It's a lovely place, Lil. And he is very impressionable."

Lilith laughed. "You like him. What can I do to help you?"

"Help me?"—in surprise.

A bell began to ring loudly. And immediately Lester Chapples came out.

"Hungry, girls?" He was not a man of many words, but the pleasant accompanying smile sufficed. He offered an arm to the little widow, whose "Jack" had been her second-cousin; Lilith took the other, and they went in to lunch, Mr. Swain escorting Miss Meigs to the seat of honor.

In the afternoon they took their first sail, and, though no fish were caught, returned with excellent appetites for dinner. Afterward the lively Theo played waltz music in the parlor with contemplative eyes upon the portrait of the deceased Mrs. Swain. Lilith danced a little with Chapples, and also with their host, just a swing or two around the room, while Miss Meigs dozed over the engravings, and concluded to retire. The young people now took to strolling in the veranda, which was built on all sides of the house. Miss Francillon walked with Chapples this time; the widow with Harold, who found her less flighty than he had imagined at first.

The couple were well apart when Chapples asked, gently:

"Will you send for your trunk, Lilith? I think we could enjoy a fortnight here, and Swain is really anxious we should."

She looked up into his face as she answered softly:

"If you wish to stay I shall be happy here."

"But I want to consult your wishes, my darling."

She felt his closer pressure of her arm.

"I would really like to stay, Lester. I will send to-morrow, and Theo will do the same."

"Dear," said Chapples in a tenderer voice, "don't you think it would be well to announce our engagement?"

"Perhaps," she answered, slowly. "To-morrow, if you wish." But is there need of haste?"

"No; only I feel as if I should like the world to know that you belong to me."

They had turned the corner of the house, and were out of the other's sight.

He leaned his face down to her own.

"Kiss me, Lilith; you love me, don't you, darling?"

"Better than any one else on earth," she cried, passionately.

"What made you sob, then, sweet heart?"

"Nothing, dear."

They turned back to the parlor, and found Theo singing softly a duet with Harold Swain, after which the little widow declared herself sleepy, and carried Lilith off to bed. Martha was closing the house, and the gentlemen went up-stairs to smoke.

"Do you know that I have been decidedly impressed, Chapples?"

"With our little Theo?"

"No, no; not Mrs. Wells."

"Not Mrs. Wells?" Lester looked up apprehensively.

"Mrs. Wells is a dear little thing, but when Miss Francillon is present other women pale. I fancy if she is here very long I shall be offering myself. I'm more in love with her than I've been with any woman since my wife died."

Chapples had risen from his seat and spoke with vehement sarcasm.

"You really would do Miss Francillon that honor? I am sure she ought to be delighted to accept a place as second best." He grew still angrier. "Perhaps, Harold Swain, you fancy any woman would jump at what there is left you to bestow. But Lilith Francillon deserves more than a second affection; a man's first, last, and eternal worship is little enough to offer her."

"Chapples," said his friend, recovering from the first surprise, "you are in love with her yourself. But how was I to know? You are undemonstrative; you gave no sign. And does she love you?"

"She has promised to be my wife."

Harold put out his hand.

"I congratulate you. Forgive my offending; it was unintentional."

"It—it is all right, old fellow. I am apt to show temper when I shouldn't. Let's talk of something else."

"By all means. I've been floundering about all the evening, finding out odd things. There's the little widow who knows another friend of mind quite intimately, Dick Livesay."

You don't know him. Funny fellow, never stays long in one place. Went West, then to Europe; came back in the fall. Capital company, one of the most fascinating fellows. Handsome features, olive complexion, lustrous eyes. I'm going to write him in the morning to come at once. I've told Mrs. Wells I should, and she seems pleased. You see, Chapples, I had it firmly fixed in my mind that you were in love with little Theo."

Lester shrugged his shoulders.

"I want a woman's first affection, and she shall have mine."

Then Miss Francillon has never loved but you?"

Certainly not," said Chapples vexedly, and shortly after withdrew for the night. Harold shook his head ever so slightly when the other had gone.

"Perhaps he's right," he said. "Yet she's very beautiful, and she is out of her teens. I think. Such girls are best with lovers from the start."

In Theo's chamber, whose windows faced the starlit sea, Lilith sat, brushing out her glowing, gold-brown hair and talking to her friend.

"I must tell you something," said Theo; "something which has been a secret until now."

Lilith's beautiful eyes turned questioningly upon her.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Oh, Lil, I wish you could see how pretty you look!"

"Never mind how I look, but tell your secrets."

"Well, when I was walking with Mr. Swain to-night, he spoke of a friend of his, whom I happen to know very well indeed. And Mr. Swain will write him to-morrow that I am here and he is to come."

"It is a lover of yours?"

"Well?"—defiantly.

"And you are in love with him?"

"Well?" stronger than before.

"You are engaged!" cried Lilith, shaking back her golden mane.

"Well?" decisively.

"Well, Theo, why don't you go on? Who is he?"

"He is very handsome and fascinating; he has money enough for us—with what Jack left me. I love him dearly, quite as much as I did Jack."

"But his name, Theo?"

"His name is Richard Livesay."

Lilith made no answer for a moment; the brush had fallen out of her hand, and she was stooping to pick it up.

"Richard Livesay," she repeated by and by.

"Yes; what's the matter, do you know my Dick?"

"Know your Dick, Theo?" she laughed, oddly. "I think not. Yet I know a Livesay once—perhaps his name was Richard."

"Did you know him well?"

"Theo, you are looking jealous. Perhaps I'd better tell you my secret; it will be announced to-morrow. I am to marry Mr. Chapples."

"O, Lilith! I am so glad, dear. I—I hoped so. How could you imagine me jealous. I do hope you will be very happy."

Lilith went on brushing her hair.

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