

# AT WAR WITH HERSELF.

The Story of a Woman's Atonement,  
by Charlotte M. Braeme.

## CHAPTER III—Continued.

The lawyer and his companion looked at the flushed face and shining eyes.

"If you think there is any doubt, however slight, tell me. Leave me here to my old life, to its monotony, its dreary gloom; I can bear it now, I could never return to it, once I left it."

"There is none," replied the lawyer, "I did not wait upon you until everything was perfectly clear; there can be no fainting or dithering to your title. The probability is that if the Earl of Charnleigh had made a will, he would have left everything to Captain Paul Fleming, who, in the genealogical table, stands next to you. He is the only member of the family, I believe, that the Earl ever saw or noticed. I remember once he mentioned your father, and asked me if he had left any children. I answered, 'Yes—one daughter.' It puzzles me, he said, 'why there are so many women in the world; could do better with just half the number.'"

Despite Leonie's emotion and anxiety a faint smile rippled over her lips.

"Did he know my father?" she asked.

"No, only by repute, as being a brave young officer. The truth was, he liked no one; if such a thing could be, I should say he was a hater of his kind."

"And this captain—what name did you say?"

"Captain Paul Fleming," repeated the lawyer, and she had whispered the name.

Did any warning come to her then of the tragedy that was to shadow her after life—the weight that was to make the coronet a burden?"

"Paul Fleming—and is he disappointed?" she asked.

"I cannot tell. He may have thought the chances were greatly in his favor; but he is too true a gentleman and too brave a man to envy the happiness that has fallen to a lady's lot."

"I hope he is not disappointed," she said; "pleased as I cannot help feeling, I should not like to purchase my happiness by another's pain."

"Even should Captain Fleming feel pain he will not show it," observed the lawyer.

"Do you say I shall have a great deal of money? He could have some of it. I am obliged to keep it all myself."

Mr. Clements smiled at the simple words—perhaps another idea suggested itself to him.

"I do not think that will be needed," he remarked. "Captain Fleming has some property besides the income derived from his profession. He is at present with his regiment at Malta."

"What relation is Captain Fleming to me?" she asked, looking up at him with the questioning glance of a child.

"I should say about fourth cousin, if such relationship exists at all. Your father was the late Earl's second cousin. Captain Fleming stands three degrees lower on the family tree. I wrote to him at once, and told him there was no will. It is six months since the late Earl died. Every possible search has been honestly made, and there is no trace of his ever having intended to make a will—no memorandum, no papers. During that time we have anxiously made out the claim of each relative, and the result is the strongest, the clearest, and the truest evidence your title is so perfectly clear that you might safely take possession of Crown Charnleigh to-morrow."

"What shall I do?" she cried. And again the beautiful young face grew deadly pale. "How can I bear the change? I shall not know what to do with my life."

"There will be much for you to consider. Have you no lady relatives of your mother's living?"

"No," she replied, with an outburst of passionate sadness. "It may be true that I am a countess, but I am quite alone in the world."

"I should suggest that you at once engage the services of some elderly lady as chaperon. You cannot live alone. Perhaps Miss Templeton would be the best person to consult in the emergency."

Mr. Clements here rose from his seat and bowed with an air of deference he had not shown before.

"Permit me," he said, "now that my legal business is explained, to be the first to offer my congratulations to the Countess of Charnleigh. I pray heaven to bless your ladyship in your new life, and to send you every blessing and prosperity and every earthly happiness."

"Thank you," she said gently.

Then Mr. Dunscombe stood up and offered his congratulations.

"If you will allow me," said the lawyer, "I will wait upon you, Lady Charnleigh, to-morrow. I have an imperative engagement this evening; to-morrow I hope to have something to suggest that will meet with your entire approbation."

With the most respectful of salutations they left her standing like one entranced; as they left her, so she remained, until the sound of the door opening aroused her.

## CHAPTER IV.

"Now, Miss Rayner," said a rough voice, "if you and your visitors have done with the room, I shall be glad to get it ready for my mistress."

The insolent tone and the sharp words generally brought a proud flush into the beautiful face; now the young girl looked at Susan Netley, the cross housemaid, as though she had not even heard her.

"I have lived at King's Court," continued the aggrieved domestic, "for many years, but this is the first time I ever saw governesses and their friends make so free."

"If she knew," thought Leonie, smiling, "instead of being insolent to me, she would fawn and flatter—she would cringe to me. Ah, the power of this wonderful gold!"

The maid-servant was annoyed to see that she had produced no effect.

"I shall certainly tell Miss Templeton the minute she returns why my work is not done," she continued; but to her surprise the young girl merely left the room, with the same strange smile on her face.

She wanted to be alone, she must be alone to think over this wondrous event.

She sat in the dull, gloomy playground until the clock struck five; no one came to tell her that tea was waiting; no one seemed to care whether she had anything or not. As she re-entered the house, Susan met her and said, not very civilly:

"Your tea has been waiting, Miss Rayner, in the school-room for an hour past."

She laughed aloud as she thought how different it would be soon, and then time passed in another dream until Miss Templeton returned.

At the formidable mistress of King's Court was to return. Leonie had been accustomed to count the hours with a certain kind of dread; now she sat so completely entranced in her gloomy dream that she did not even hear the noise of the much-anticipated arrival. It was a custom of Miss Templeton's to keep the governess

pupil in her place, as she expressed it, by continually finding fault with her. When she returned from her holidays, it required some ingenuity to make out a list of complaints against the young girl, but she generally succeeded. On this occasion she did not linger long over the dainty tea prepared for her. Susan, fired with indignation at Miss Rayner's insensibility, was only too pleased to tell how the young governess had visited the drawing-room, and had spent over two hours with them. Miss Templeton went at once to the school-room, where she found the young lady seated before her cold, undusted tea.

A frosty greeting passed between them, and then Miss Templeton seated herself in the chair.

"I am sorry to hear, Miss Rayner," she began, "that your conduct during my absence has not been in accordance with what I could have wished. May I ask who were the gentlemen you entertained for more than two hours to-day?"

There was a faint ripple of a smile on the beautiful lips, which angered Miss Templeton very much.

"Two hours," continued the schoolmistress, "is a long time for any lady to spend in the society of gentlemen, above all of strangers, as I should imagine these to have been."

"Then I must demand an explanation of your conduct, Miss Rayner. King's Court is both known and honored for the exemplary conduct of its conductor. If you have deviated in the slightest degree from established rules, we must part."

The gentlewoman introduced herself. Miss Templeton was quite innocent of having known of their visit beforehand.

"Will you tell me who they were?" repeated the angry lady.

"Mr. Clements, a lawyer of Lincoln's Inn, and Mr. Dunscombe, the manager or steward of the Crown Leighton estates."

"May I be permitted to inquire what you wanted with you, Miss Rayner?" said Miss Templeton, somewhat wondering.

"They came on business that astonished me, Miss Templeton, as it will you. They came to tell me that owing to a strange chain of circumstances, Fortune has played a jest upon me."

"I do not understand riddles," said Miss Templeton, coldly.

"It is the great lever of the world," remarked Miss Templeton.

"Yet I cannot imagine Chevalier Bayard or King Arthur, or any of the heroes I loved, caring for it," rejoined Leonie, "there is nothing grand or heroic in the love of money."

"For the love of money is not without its charm."

"My dearest child, you cannot mean it!" You are jesting, Miss Rayner!"

"I am speaking in all sober truth," she said.

"I am Countess of Charnleigh, and mistress of the Crown Leighton estates."

"My dearest child, you cannot mean it!" You are jesting, Miss Rayner!"

"But your mother was only governess—your father quite."

"Poor, but for all that of good family and a gentleman. It is as his daughter, Miss Templeton, that I am Countess of Charnleigh."

FIG. 1. TO BE CONTINUED!

whose surprise could still be barely expressed, by continually finding fault with her.

"To-day, to-morrow, or any time she wills," was the reply. "If I may venture upon making a suggestion to Lady Charnleigh, it is that she should, under Miss Templeton's chaperonage, go at once to town, and there make such purchases as she may deem fit; then, when ready, I advise no further delay in going to Crown Leighton. If your ladyship will authorize me, I will at once write to one or two influential persons who will be able to recommend a proper and suitable companion."

"You mean that I am to buy new dresses," she said, looking at him with a face in a glow of delight. "How shall I know what kind of dresses a countless world should wear? My wildest dreams never went beyond a pretty silk."

He smiled. Miss Templeton looked distressed.

"Your best plan, Lady Charnleigh," she suggested, "will be to drive at once to Madam Berton and let her get everything necessary; she will know if you do not. As a matter of course, you must for some time wear mourning; but, as expense will not be a matter of consideration, you can have it as elegant as possible."

"I should explain to your ladyship," continued Mr. Clements, gravely, "that during the six months we have spent in ascertaining the claims of different and distant relatives, the income derived from various sources, to be afterward explained to you, has accumulated and been lying on my hands. I have brought with me a check for a thousand pounds. You can do afterward as you will;" and he looked half wistfully at this young girl on whom the marks of splendid estates had so suddenly fallen.

"A thousand pounds!" said Leonie, Lady Charnleigh.

"And I have never in my whole life before had five shillings of my own."

"Perhaps, after all, the best way to acquire a true appreciation of money is to want it," said Mr. Clements. "And now, Lady Charnleigh, it only remains for me to add that whenever you think of going to Crown Leighton I shall be happy to attend you."

"I should like to give half of this away," she said; "how many people would be made happy by a little money!" She was looking with her bright eyes full of wonder at the check he had laid before her.

"It is the great lever of the world," remarked Miss Templeton.

"Yet I cannot imagine Chevalier Bayard or King Arthur, or any of the heroes I loved, caring for it," rejoined Leonie, "there is nothing grand or heroic in the love of money."

"For the love of money is not without its charm."

"My dearest child, you cannot mean it!" You are jesting, Miss Rayner!"

"I am speaking in all sober truth," she said.

"I am Countess of Charnleigh, and mistress of the Crown Leighton estates."

"My dearest child, you cannot mean it!" You are jesting, Miss Rayner!"

"But your mother was only governess—your father quite."

"Poor, but for all that of good family and a gentleman. It is as his daughter, Miss Templeton, that I am Countess of Charnleigh."

FIG. 1. TO BE CONTINUED!

FIG. 2. GUIDING BOARD.

## DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

### TOPICS OF INTEREST TO FARMER AND HOUSEWIFE.

Two Ways of Shocking Corn—The Care of Apples—Value of Reputation to a Farmer—Setting Cuttings—Box for Wetting Hay, Etc.

#### Setting Cuttings.

In setting grape, currant, or other cuttings in the open ground a trench is often plowed or dug, the cuttings placed in position, and the earth thrown back. Many make the ground as mellow as possible, and with a pointed stick or sharpened iron rod make a hole of the proper depth and incision, and insert the cutting. The operation can be greatly expedited and cheapened, says the American Agriculturist, by the hand foot dibble shown in the illustration.

FIG. 1. FOOT DIBBLE.

FIG. 2. GUIDING BOARD.

Two Ways of Shocking Corn—The Care of Apples—Value of Reputation to a Farmer—Setting Cuttings—Box for Wetting Hay, Etc.

#### Setting Cuttings.

In setting grape, currant, or other cuttings in the open ground a trench is often plowed or dug, the cuttings placed in position, and the earth thrown back. Many make the ground as mellow as possible, and with a pointed stick or sharpened iron rod make a hole of the proper depth and incision, and insert the cutting. The operation can be greatly expedited and cheapened, says the American Agriculturist, by the hand foot dibble shown in the illustration.

FIG. 1. FOOT DIBBLE.

FIG. 2. GUIDING BOARD.

Two Ways of Shocking Corn—The Care of Apples—Value of Reputation to a Farmer—Setting Cuttings—Box for Wetting Hay, Etc.

#### Setting Cuttings.

In setting grape, currant, or other cuttings in the open ground a trench is often plowed or dug, the cuttings placed in position, and the earth thrown back. Many make the ground as mellow as possible, and with a pointed stick or sharpened iron rod make a hole of the proper depth and incision, and insert the cutting. The operation can be greatly expedited and cheapened, says the American Agriculturist, by the hand foot dibble shown in the illustration.

FIG. 1. FOOT DIBBLE.

FIG. 2. GUIDING BOARD.

Two Ways of Shocking Corn—The Care of Apples—Value of Reputation to a Farmer—Setting Cuttings—Box for Wetting Hay, Etc.

#### Setting Cuttings.

In setting grape, currant, or other cuttings in the open ground a trench is often plowed or dug, the cuttings placed in position, and the earth thrown back. Many make the ground as mellow as possible, and with a pointed stick or sharpened iron rod make a hole of the proper depth and incision, and insert the cutting. The operation can be greatly expedited and cheapened, says the American Agriculturist, by the hand foot dibble shown in the illustration.

FIG. 1. FOOT DIBBLE.

FIG. 2. GUIDING BOARD.

Two Ways of Shocking Corn—The Care of Apples—Value of Reputation to a Farmer—Setting Cuttings—Box for Wetting Hay, Etc.

#### Setting Cuttings.

In setting grape, currant, or other cuttings in the open ground a trench is often plowed or dug, the cuttings placed in position, and the earth thrown back. Many make the ground as mellow as possible, and with a pointed stick or sharpened iron rod make a hole of the proper depth and incision, and insert the cutting. The operation can be greatly expedited and cheapened, says the American Agriculturist, by the hand foot dibble shown in the illustration.

FIG. 1. FOOT DIBBLE.

FIG. 2. GUIDING BOARD.

Two Ways of Shocking Corn—The Care of Apples—Value of Reputation to a Farmer—Setting Cuttings—Box for Wetting Hay, Etc.

#### Setting Cuttings.

In setting grape, currant, or other cuttings in the open ground a trench is often plowed or dug, the cuttings placed in position, and the earth thrown back. Many make the ground as mellow as possible, and with a pointed stick or sharpened iron rod make a hole of the proper depth and incision, and insert the cutting. The operation can be greatly expedited and cheapened, says the American Agriculturist, by the hand foot dibble shown in the illustration.

FIG. 1. FOOT DIBBLE.

FIG. 2. GUIDING BOARD.

Two Ways of Shocking Corn—The Care of Apples—Value of Reputation to a Farmer—Setting Cuttings—Box for Wetting Hay, Etc.

#### Setting Cuttings.

In setting grape, currant, or other cuttings in the open ground a trench is often plowed or dug, the cuttings placed in position, and the earth thrown back. Many make the ground as mellow as possible, and with a pointed stick or sharpened iron rod make a hole