

# Silence

often calling my attention. Sing, my bird!"

She sat down and sung, clear as a bell and gay as a lark, the lovely old ditty. Her voice was her one perfectly beautiful possession, "except," as Roderick sometimes said, "except her soul," of which it was the exponent. He listened to it with all his heart in his eyes.

"Do you remember, Silence, that first night at the Reyniers', when you sung 'My Queen?' And again—no, you could not remember that—the first Sunday when I heard you singing behind me, unseen, in Neuchatel cathedral? It sounded like the voice of an angel—my good angel. And now I have her in my home, my own home, forever! And she is—only a woman, and has got no wings."

"How clever you are!" Roderick cried, enthusiastically, until he discovered the sad deficit, which must be met somehow. How? "Perhaps the people would wait; Richerden trades men often do."

"If they could, we could not," Silence answered, gravely. "They must be paid."

"How? Not by asking my mother; it is impossible," added he abruptly. "And otherwise what can I do? I can not dig; to beg I am ashamed."

Roderick spoke with great bitterness. His wife made no answer, but went into her bedroom and brought out a large jeweler's case—necklet, bracelet brooch.

"It was very good of you, dear, to give me these. I know what they cost for I have found the receipted bill; still, if we had, not jewels, but the money."

Roderick drew himself up with exceeding pride. "Am I come to such a pass that I require to sell my wife's ornaments? It is a little hard." Then bursting out hotly, as she had never before seen him do— "No, Silence, you are only a girl; you don't understand the world, or you would never have suggested such a thing. Not that; anything but that."

"There is nothing but that, so far as I see," she answered gently, but firmly. "It is true I am a girl; but I am not quite ignorant of the world—at least of its troubles. Mamma and I were often very poor—so poor that we did not always have enough to eat; but we held our heads high, because we owed no one anything. She used to say, 'My child, what we can not pay for we will go without.' I always obeyed her. I must do so still. You must never ask me to wear these jewels."

He was so astonished that his sudden wrath melted away in a moment. The gentle creature whom he could have ruled with a word! Yet by the way she quietly put the ornaments back and laid the case aside, he knew she meant what she said, and that nothing would ever move her to act against her conscience.

"Do you not care for them, the gifts I gave you?" said Roderick, tenderly. "Care for them? Do I not? But I care for you still more. I would rather never wear jewels to the day of my death than see my husband look as he has looked this day."

"But to sell your ornaments! even if I can do it, which I doubt? My poor child! what would Richerden people say?"

"Would Richerden think it more discreditable that you should sell my ornaments than that your tradespeople should go without their money? Then I think the sooner we leave Richerden the better."

"Have we quarreled?"

"I don't know," said she, half smiling.

Roderick paused a minute, and then held out his arms.

"You are right; dear; these things are so much easier to women than to men. Let me go to the jeweler and say—"

"That you do not like them?"

"No, for that would not be true. I like them very much—as I like all pretty things. But I like other things better—honor, peace, and a quiet mind. We will set ourselves right now, and after that we will be careful—very careful. You must earn the money, and, like Macbeth, leave all the rest to me; then this will never happen again, I being so 'clever' as you say."

The laugh in her voice, but the tears in her eyes—who could withstand either? Not Roderick, certainly. Besides, he had the sense to see, what not all men can see, that there are things which a woman can do better than a man, in which a woman is often wise and a man foolish. It is not a question of superiority or inferiority, but merely difference.

"I perceive," he said, "I must give you the reins and sink into my right place in the household chariot. Well, perhaps it is best; far better than turning into a domestic phæton and setting the world on fire. Seriously, my darling, this shall not happen again, if you will help me."

So ended their first quarrel, which Silence persisted was not a quarrel, but only a slight variety in opinion. And she did help him from that time forward; in many things that might otherwise have been very painful to a proud man, very wearisome to a busy man. But she had a way of doing them all, even the most humiliating which took the sting out of them entirely. And when the money was obtained, everybody paid, and the preparations completed for their next day's journey to Blackhall, young Mrs. Jardine sat on her box, which she had packed with her own hands, looking pale and tired certainly, but with the cheerfulness of countenances. Her husband, too, went whistling, "Oh Nannie, will thou gang wi' me?" in which song, sung under his instruction as to accent, she had created quite a furor at several dinner parties.

"Evidently you do not wish to leave the flaunting town, and are anything but disgusted with the 'lowly cot and russet gown' to which I am dooming you," said he laughing. "So, give me the song, even though our piano is gone, and our parlor looks anything but that 'bower of roses by Bende-meer's stream,' to which you are so

and orderly, I believe, but she has been dead more than a year now."

"Dear Cousin Silence!"—with a sudden pathos in her voice which struck her husband. "I think a good deal of Cousin Silence. It seems so strange that we should be here—and so happy—we two. Did you know, Roderick, that this was her favorite walk—this terrace—hers and Cousin Henry's?"

"Cousin Henry—that must have been my father."

"Yes, my father always called him so. He used to speak of him sometimes, not very often. I have never told you—here her voice fell into the tenderest whisper—"but I have sometimes thought, if they all knew it, they would be very glad that we were married. Because, as I found out by some letters I had to look over after mamma died, Cousin Silence ought to have married Cousin Henry, if my father had not come between them in some cruel way. He was very sorry afterward—poor papa! but it was too late, I suppose. And they are all dead now, and we are here. Is it not strange?"

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"Front Elevation."

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## HOOSIER HAPPENINGS

### NEWS OF THE WEEK CONCISELY CONDENSED.

What Our Neighbors are Doing—Matters of General and Local Interest—Marriages and Deaths—Accidents and Crimes—Personal Pointers About Indianaans.

Hon. James M. Barrett.

Senator James M. Barrett of Fort Wayne, is one of the young, hustling Democrats of Northern Indiana, and is a leader among the politicians of his party. He is a member of the firm of Morris, Bell, Barrett & Morris and his ability in that line is fully attested by the success which his firm has attained in the many legal battles in which they have participated. He made his first political speech at a poll raising in the Sixth Ward in 1876, in honor of Mr. Charles A. Munson, then a candidate for Sheriff, and took an active part on the stump in every campaign since.

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