

## Aunt Diana

The Sunshine  
of the Family

CHAPTER XIX.—(Continued.)

It was a lovely evening, as Missie said—one of those rare September evenings that come when summer and autumn seem blending into each other. Alison stood for a moment in the hall, debating whether she was too tired to seek Roger in the timber yard, or whether she should indulge in solitary musing under the lime trees. A free half hour was a delicious boon, and she must employ it to the best advantage. She decided after a moment that she was too dull for even Roger's company to cheer her—for she was in one of those moods that the masculine mind finds so difficult to understand—and she was just taking down her garden hat from the peg when a figure came between her and the evening light, a familiar voice spoke her name, and the next moment Alison was in "Aunt Diana's" arms.

Miss Carrington's "kisses" were very grave and tender. They spoke volumes, but she seemed to have no words at the moment. But Alison's "Oh, Aunt Di!" was more than eloquent—the quiver of her voice meant ecstasy. But the next moment Miss Carrington put her at arm's length, and still holding her, scrutinized her face almost pitifully.

"Allie, my poor, dear child, what have they done to you? Oh, dear, what thin cheeks, what heavy eyes!" And suddenly closing her face between her hands, she kissed her again and again, and Miss Carrington was not a demonstrative woman—her caresses meant something out of the common. They brought Alison's soft color back, and the happy tears came into her eyes.

"I am glad I did not tell you," returned, unsteadily; "I shall be quite well and rested now I have seen your dear face again. Oh, Aunt Di, how I have wanted you!" her voice sinking still lower.

"Yes, I know," replied Miss Carrington, almost abruptly—all the more because her feelings were not so well under control as usual. "Allie, what must you have thought of my silence? Come to us sit down somewhere where I can talk to you without interruption. I don't want to see any other face but yours for the present—not even Roger's."

"I think my room will be best," returned Alison, hesitating a little. "Miss Leigh is in the drawing room and Rudel in the dining room, and Roger generally sits in the study when he comes in at an evening. Wait a moment, Aunt Di, please; I must ask Sarah to make some tea for you—supper will not be ready for an hour. Oh," smiling archly, "I know your taste—Aunt Di can not go without her tea."

Miss Carrington offered no remonstrance; perhaps she was in need of refreshment. She waited to see the cabman deposit her luggage in the hall, and then she followed Alison upstairs.

"My dear," she observed, looking round her as she entered, "this is not your old room; I thought this was Missie's?"

"Yes, but Missie had mine, and I did not like to turn her out—it would only have caused unpleasantness. Please do not look so grieved, Aunt Di; I have got used to it, and do not mind the crane so much as I did at first—at least, it does not make my head ache!"

"And you never told me. I could not have borne to have thought of you in this room, Allie. Well, you have spared me many a heartache. I should have wanted my child back in her little nest, and have been unhappy because I could not get her." And Miss Carrington positively shuddered as she looked at the grim lines on the crane, and round the dark, heavily furnished room.

"I am glad I did not tell you," returned Alison, gently, as she unfastened Miss Carrington's mantle and waited on her. Perhaps Aunt Diana loved to feel the soft little hands busy about her, for she offered, no resistance as Alison smoothed her hair, and brought her a footstool, of which she took possession herself.

"That is right," observed Miss Carrington, stroking the brown head that laid itself in child fashion on her lap. Alison was so very tired there was no abandon in her attitude, and yet she was so happy too.

"Now we will have one of our cozy talks—don't look at the door, Allie—I am in no hurry for my tea. My dear! I am longing to tell you how it is your letters have miscarried; I read them all for the first time last night."

"Aunt Di, do you mean that you have flown to us—only telegraph wires could have done it," laughing incredulously.

"You may be sure that I should have flown to you if I had the power," returned Miss Carrington, seriously. "Allie, I was not in Switzerland as you thought. I was recalled suddenly, a fortnight ago by Mr. Moore's sudden illness. Greville telegraphed for me, and I came home at once."

"Mr. Moore ill?" exclaimed Alison, with fast paling face.

"Yes, very ill, but, thank God, my dear old friend is better now. It has been an anxious time for us, darling. Greville is cast down and unhappy—you need not look at me so reproachfully. I would not write to you—it would have given you useless pain, and I was so engrossed with nursing that letters were impossible luxuries. Little did I think in my night watching that Allie was anxious and unhappy, too."

"Aunt Di, that is why you look tired."

"Tired! Nonsense, child. It is a blessed thing to wear out one's self for one's friends. I love that sort of fatigue. I could not have left my patient until he was out of danger, but now I can safely trust him in Greville's charge. He is a capital nurse, in spite of his boyishness, and he has Burton to help him. By the bye, Mr. Moore sent his love to Sunny. Stay, I must try and remember his message; he bade his little sunbeam remember her mission, and not to be afraid of cloudy days."

"Did Mr. Greville send me a message, too?" asked Alison, a little timidly. Miss Carrington hesitated.

"Well, I think he sent his love, too—but, in fact, he sent a great many messages, but I told him I could not be a carrier of nonsense, and should only deliver one—that he had kept his promise, and had been working famously."

"Oh, I am so glad," returned Alison, brightening at this. "Aunt Di—it was not good of you to keep Mr. Moore's illness from me; I should have liked to have shared your anxiety. Dear old man, I am so thankful he is spared."

"His character seemed lovelier than ever in his hours of suffering," observed Miss Carrington, thoughtfully; "he was so patient, so grateful to us all, for our care of him. I understand then what being like a little child meant—it seemed as though it were we who were blind, not he—he seemed so steeped in the light of heaven."

"Do you think he wanted to die?" asked Alison, in an awestruck voice. "How strange it seems that he should be so willing to go."

"Why not?" replied her aunt. "Death has no terror for him. Why should he fear the summons from the Master whom he loved and tried to serve here, and who died on the cross for his redemption? And yet he was resigned to stay, for Greville's sake. The lad wants me a little longer," he said once. "Well, I suppose I can spare my boy a year or two out of eternity; I mean to have no will of my own about it. When the Master calls I shall be ready, but perhaps—for who knows His graciousness?—He may be thinking of my boy, too."

"How I should love to see him again!" exclaimed Alison with a sigh.

"So you will by and by, I hope. He missed you dreadfully, Alison."

"I am not going to tell you about that." Then, as Alison's eyes looked pleadingly, she continued earnestly: "Child, I believe we are a sort of necessity to each other—at least, I sort of myself to him. I am always thinking how Allie will like this or that."

"I don't think any one was ever so wicked as I, Aunt Diana," sighed Missie. "Well, my dear," returned her aunt, briskly, "is not my concern to go about weighing my neighbor's trespasses, in a balance? I don't fancy human scales would be nicely adjusted; but I am quite sure of one thing—that I was a very naughty child myself—the red-cheeked apples I stole gave me moral indigestion still."

"It was impossible to look grave over this; Alison's merry laugh was infectious.

Miss Carrington strolled a few more minutes, questioning Missie about her arm, and talking kindly to her, until the poor child was quite happy and at her ease.

"I don't know what it is," she said that night, when Alison gave her the good-night kiss; "you all seem trying to make me believe that I have not been naughty at all, and that there is nothing to forgive."

"I thought forgiveness meant that," returned Alison, simply; "you know how the Bible speaks of sins blotted out—that means the page is white again—one can write freshly across the blank."

There never was a merrier supper table than the one at The Holms that night; late as it was, Poppe sat up for it, and no one rebuked her for her chatter. Rudel kept up the character of a bashful school boy; but even he relaxed his wide-eyed gravity when Otter was admired and kind inquiries made after Sulky. Aunt Diana knew the way to a boy's heart; though she never had a boy of her own; but there are some unmarried women whose large natures can embrace a whole world of little ones, and such a one was Aunt Diana.

But as she talked and laughed with the others, her keen gray eyes followed Alison's every movement. It seemed to Miss Carrington that her darling was changed somehow—some of the brightness that had always lighted her young face had faded a little; she was graver and more in earnest.

"Allie has laid aside her leading strings, and has learned to walk alone," she said to herself; "though she loves me as much as ever, she needs me less. I ought to be glad to know this, for I can not expect to live forever."

"To be continued."

"Oh, Alison, it will be dreadful to see her! I always was afraid of her, you know: she is one of those painfully good people who make one feel small and horrid. Please don't let her come in tonight." And Missie sat bolt upright in a panic.

Now, Miss Carrington had quick ears, and she caught the most of this speech and laughed to herself softly; for it is those who try hard to be good who are the most conscious of evil within, and Miss Carrington was one who had often cried with St. Paul, "The good that I would I do not." Her heart felt very soft toward the willful little girl who had brought such misery on herself and others, even before she entered the room, but her first sight of Missie gave her a feeling of surprise. She said afterward she ceased to wonder at Ainslie's infatuation for the child, for she was certainly a bewitching little creature.

The pink ribbons in Missie's dainty dressing gown were not pinker than her cheeks, her blue eyes shone with uneasy light, and the soft, fair hair lay delicate rings above the pretty, childish face; her frightened, appealing look would have touched a colder heart than Miss Carrington's, and it was with real affection that she bent over her. But Missie's tender conscience made her shrink from her aunt's kisses.

"Please don't be so kind to me, Aunt Diana—every one is, and it is not right."

"My dear little girl, we none of us want to see our poor little butterfly broken on the wheel; we are far too sorry for you. Of course, you have been a naughty child; you have been setting your small world on fire, and have got your pretty wings singed. Well, now you have learned wisdom through painful experience, and we must all help you to get the lesson perfect."

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"These types do not represent the womanhood and motherhood of our country. The one that does represent it is sensible, sincere, economical and charitable, and has little regard for the extravagance and artificiality of her sex."

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"As Things Are."

It was evening in the great west.

The golden sun had gone down over the cornfields and all was silent.

"Maria, what did you do with that trinket that came today?"

"I hung it up in the art gallery next to the Rembrandt."

"That's right, how about that new balloon we ordered?"

"We got a wireless from the factory today, saying that it wouldn't be ready until next week."

"Don't make me vain, Roger."

"Missie and I have proposed buying her a little red morocco book and sending it to her," continued Roger, with dry humor; "the title will be 'Aunt Diana's Sayings' for Allie; brings out a fresh one every day. Missie says she is inventive, and coins them herself; but I have an idea that they are genuine."

Miss Carrington shook her head at him, and only bade him lead the way to his father's room. Alison had already prepared him for his sister-in-law's visit, and he held out his hand with a pleased smile.

"Yes."

"And how about that first folio edition of Shakespeare?"

"That's here."

And then the Kansas farmer, removing his evening clothes and putting on his overalls, went out on the estate and locked up for the night.—Thomas L. Masson in *Success Magazine*.

A Question of Honor.

"Women should not copy men in dress, manner or ideas, but should be like the women of colonial days, who could sew, cook and care for the home, and who had an abiding faith in their husbands," declared Rev. William Hayes Leggill, D. D., president of Westminster College, Fulton, Mo. In his address at the recent banquet of the Society of Colonial Wars, held in St. Louis.

"Few women of to-day," he said, "would leave their homes, their friends and all the attractions of life to follow their husbands into a foreign land as did the women of colonial days. Modern influences have had a deteriorating effect on women; they have destroyed much of the attractiveness of women."

"The home is the place for women unless it is absolutely necessary for them to leave it. I do not believe any woman should enter the field of business and take a man's place unless conditions require that she should do so. I am not a believer in woman's rights as woman's rights are known to me."

Quite Out of Place.

Timid—That boss of yours is so pompous he always makes me feel ill at ease.

Clark—Strange; I felt out of place when he was talking to me to-day.

Timid—That so?

Clark—Yes; he was telling me I needn't come back after Saturday.

Her Hero.

"Who's your ideal of bravery?" queried the old bachelor. Is it General Kuroki?

"No," answered the spinster despatchately, "it's a Mormon."—The Tatler.

## WOMEN

"Types" of Femininity.

Charles R. Barrett, an educator known throughout the Middle West, classifies American women into "types" desirable and undesirable. He says:

"The type of American woman most in the public eye is artificial, insincere, extravagant and selfish. She is an unsolvable proposition. She will tyrannize her husband and love a dog."

"This type demands consideration on the ground of sex only. She has received such attention by reason of sex that she is spoiled, overqueened. She does not recognize merit or worth as qualifications necessary to herself. She is nervous and proud of it. She lacks repose and poise, having much the disposition of a spoiled child. Incapable of gratifying her ambitions alone, she is dependent on the intellectual or financial worth of father or husband to get a place in society. She likes a palatial home, but lacks appreciation of how she gets it or who maintains it. She seeks recognition and admiration solely from the rating of worldly possessions and the influence she commands through the position of father or husband."

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