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MAY GOLDWORTHY;
A SEQUEL TO
"THE QUEEN O' THE MAY."

By ANNE BEALE.

CHAPTER II.

CLOUDS CLEARING.

MAY had some difficulty in persuading her father to accept Mrs. Richards's invitation; indeed, she shrank from the visit herself. Still, she reckoned it a positive duty to comply with the wishes of friends who had been so kind to her, though she felt that it would be strange to become a guest of those by whom she must have been always considered an inferior. She packed her own and her father's small boxes, but on the settled Tuesday morning Mr. Goldworthy declared his inability to fulfil his engagement. He was, he said, too nervous for society.

"Dear papa, remember that you told Mrs. Richards that you had



"AND THEY WERE OFF."

left Glenpant because it was so quiet," pleaded May. "Will she not think you contradictory if you refuse to join her cheerful family party?"

"Perhaps so. But at Glenpant I was always reproaching myself for your dear mother's wrecked life, and everyone I met seemed to be asking me, 'What have you done with sweet Mary Morrison?' Here it is different, for there are no relations."

"Here is the carriage, dear papa," exclaimed May, in despair. "What are we to do?"

"Send it back, my darling, with an apology. I really cannot go."

The landlady was in the doorway, and understood May's difficulty. She at once passed it on to the coachman. He dismounted, and asking a man who stood by to hold his horses, went, hat in hand, into the sitting-room.

"Beg your pardon, sir, but I am ordered not to wait. You are expected to luncheon," he began.

"I am truly sorry, but I am quite incapable," returned Goldworthy.

"Couldn't possibly return without you, sir. As much as my place is worth," said the coachman, who had received a hint from Mrs. Richards previously.

"What am I to do?" asked Goldworthy, hopelessly.

"Come at once, dear papa. You will be strengthened by the drive and refreshed by pleasant company. Never mind your coat. The other is in the portmanteau, and you can change it when you get there. It is really impossible to send back the carriage."

After a little further opposition, May and the coachman prevailed, and Mr. Goldworthy was seated in the carriage. The modest luggage was soon up, May by her father's side, and they were off. But this little scene will give the reader an idea of May's life since she left Glenpant. Her father was what is called "hipped," and needed constant rousing. May's prognostic concerning the drive proved true, and the mountain breezes and glorious scenery revived him as if by magic. By the time they arrived at their destination he was another man, and May was radiant with joy because he was thus transformed.

Plás Elain, Mr. Richards's new house, was a handsome mansion backed by mountains, and situated near his slate quarries. These, as well as shares in various mines, constituted his wealth in North Wales, and he was well-known as a man of substance. Although Mr. Goldworthy declared the house too new to be picturesque, and May thought with regret of the sweet, peaceful, antiquated house her kind friends had tenanted in the south, they both forgot all else in the hospitable reception they met with. No sooner were they in the hall than May uttered an exclamation of delight, for she was welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Everton and their little girl.

"Dear sir! dear Miss Edith! I am so glad," she cried, a hand extended to each, at which they laughed, and she remembered that she had returned in imagination to Derwen.

Her father was scarcely less pleased than herself at meeting these, his best friends, in London, but whom neither had seen since their return from the Continent. Mrs. Richards and her other daughters received them just as cordially, and soon conducted them to their rooms, which were near one another. Mr. Goldworthy changed his coat in no time, and looked spruce, if still artistic, as he and May descended the broad staircase together.

It turned out, to May's uneasiness, that all the neighbours and many of the performers at the concert had been invited to meet them; some to luncheon, others to dinner, part one day, part the next. Not that she was uneasy on her own account, but on her father's.

Always simple and self-possessed herself, she was not afraid of the people she was introduced to, because she neither aped nor cringed, but was always natural. But he was peculiar, and avoided what is called company, and disliked being flattered merely because he had won name and fame as an artist. He, however, soon set her at her ease by joining in animated conversation, first with one, then with another. She had scarcely realised before how charming her father could be; and could not resist whispering to him, "Dear papa, how well you look! How good you are!"

"It is all your doing, my darling," he replied. "And, perhaps, in part the coachman's."

They both laughed, and he recited the little scene at the lodging so amusingly that everyone else joined.

It is not necessary to tell how May was caressed and admired, not only for her sweet singing, but her sweeter self. She thanked everyone with the utmost simplicity for their kind expressions, and sang to please them from morning to night. There was, indeed, much music; for she was not the only accomplished performer invited to Plás Elain, but she was the most attractive. Mr. Everton took her father on sketching expeditions, and thus, to the ill-concealed chagrin of both, they were separated.

"My good friend, you must lose her some day," said Mr. Everton, when the devoted father complained that May had not come with them.

"I will never be parted from her while I live," was the reply.

They had been two days at Plás Elain, and they were to leave on the morning of the fourth. Mr. Richards had been absent all the third day, and he was not expected back to dinner. The party was therefore restricted to the family, and Mr. Everton took the master's place at table. May sat near him, Mrs. Everton on her other side. Mr. Goldworthy was placed by Mrs. Richards, and entertained her and her unmarried daughters by foreign gossip.

"When we are all back in town again you will come and see us at once, May," said Mr. Everton.

"And help in the Crystal Palace teas," added his wife.

"Oh, I long to do something for the children of the pantomimes," replied May. "You remember, dear sir, when you rescued me from the stage and the union, and sent me to my dear great-grandparents. How well I remember that parting at the railway, and all that passed afterwards—and your kindness, dear Mrs. Everton!"

"And your dancing, and singing, and doll!" laughed Mrs. Everton. "What has become of Terpsichore?"

"I have her still," replied May, blushing. "She is a good friend, for she reminds me of my childhood, and especially of great-grandmother. I took her abroad with me; and, indeed, the Welsh costume is as pretty as the Italian."

"You are a true patriot, May," laughed Mr. Everton.

"Oh, the whole wide world cannot compare with sweet, wild Wales!" she cried, enthusiastically.

At this moment, to the general surprise, Mr. Richards entered.

"I did not expect to be so soon," he explained. "I have brought a friend with me. I hope you haven't quite cleared the dishes. Stay where you are, Everton; I shall be only too glad to be allowed to eat instead of carving. We have had a hard day's work, distributing money and seeing to the wounded. Some more plates, Johnnes."

While Mr. Richards was speaking, May's

eyes were fixed on the door, and before he had concluded she had risen from her seat impulsively, and hurried towards it with the words—

"Cousin! Cousin Meredith!"

"May! Is it possible? Can it be you?" was the greeting she received in return.

Her extended hands were soon clasped in those of Meredith, and both forgot, for the moment, the place and the hour. Mr. Richards had planned this little surprise, having abstained purposely from telling Meredith whom he was to meet.

The confused greetings that ensued did away with all embarrassment, if there were any, and when Meredith finally approached Mr. Goldworthy, he was able to meet him without any display of the agitation which he really felt.

"Meredith, my good friend, this is a delightful surprise," said that gentleman, grasping his hand. "Why have you not written? We have been in despair, my Madeline and I."

"Explanations after dinner, if you please, gentlemen," broke in Mr. Richards, who was a man of business, and would have no loss of time.

So the new arrivals sat down: Meredith between the two Misses Richards and opposite May, the master of the mansion at his wife's side.

"Don't let us interrupt the dinner; we will catch you up, as the children say in their tasks," said Mr. Richards, decidedly, and he was obeyed, as was his wont.

But May's appetite was gone. Meredith had spoiled her dinner for that day. She could only look at him—think of him. In vain Mr. and Mrs. Everton pressed her to eat.

"Indeed, I cannot," she said, simply. "I am so happy. We have not met for more than a year. But, dear sir, don't you think he looks ill? And so much older!"

"His life is an anxious and responsible one, May," replied Mr. Everton. "He certainly is altered, but, I think, for the better."

"Ah, that could not be," said May, with a smile. "Cousin Meredith must always be the same."

"He certainly is not an old man yet, May. He cannot be more than seven or eight and twenty," laughed Mr. Everton. "Yes, Morrison, we are making personal remarks," he added, as he caught Meredith's inquiring eyes.

The young man coloured and continued his conversation with Miss Bertha. It was rumoured in those parts that Mr. Richards had such a high opinion of him that he would not object to him as a son-in-law, albeit Miss Bertha was slightly his senior. Still, as May remarked to herself, she looked as young as he did.

"Why did you not join us abroad, Meredith?" asked Mr. Goldworthy across the table. "I left word at Glenpant that we should expect you."

"It was quite impossible," returned Meredith; and May, who knew every inflection of his voice, fancied the response was cold.

"My Madeline also looked for you. We talked much of Cousin Meredith," continued Goldworthy.

"Young men who have their way to make have no time for idle travel, sir," put in Mr. Richards, "and Morrison has not let the grass grow under his feet, I can tell you."

"I admire resolution and perseverance beyond everything," sighed Goldworthy. "If I had possessed them, I should have been a different man."

"We have not all the same physical energy and health," said Meredith; "mental vigour is almost useless without them."

"Thank you for making my apology," returned Goldworthy, with a look at Mere-

dith so affectionate that he must have been obtuse not to read it; but he was obtuse.

In the evening May was planted at the piano as usual, and had no time for a private word with her cousin. But he was near her—at her side—turning over the leaves of her songs, joining in glees, choruses, hymns, and the old tunes that all the party had sung together at Derwen hundreds of times.

"This is almost like practising for the great competition," said May. "Dear papa, what a time that was!"

"A blessed time for me, my darling!" replied her father, whose hand was on her shoulder. "I should have been in my grave, or—"

"Hush, hush, dear!" cried May, suddenly striking up a lively Italian air, to which he hummed a refrain, and the words of which, in patois, he was afterwards prevailed upon to sing.

And so the evening of the reunion of May and her Cousin Meredith passed.

The following morning they met again at breakfast, but he and Mr. Richards disappeared immediately afterwards, and May could not even manage to inform him of their plans. She was disappointed, for it seemed so unnatural; "but then," she thought to herself, "all that is merely conventional is unnatural, and I suppose he and I are growing conventional. Oh! I am thankful my dear papa and Mr. Minister are unconventional."

She and her father were pressed to prolong their visit at Plás Elain, but Goldworthy positively declined. He was as eloquent in his thanks for the hospitality shown him as even May could desire, and left behind him several valuable sketches that he had taken during his stay, and which were subsequently framed and hung, but not "skyed." Mr. and Mrs. Everton accompanied them on their return journey, and left them at their lodging, exacting a promise that they would visit them at Sydenham as soon as they got back to London.

"That is over. I am thankful!" exclaimed Mr. Goldworthy, as soon as he and May were alone.

"But you enjoyed it, dear papa?"

"Yes, really. But I saw nothing of my darling. The friends were too kind, too appreciative. They engrossed you wholly. Have they spoilt my Madeline? I trow not. But I am not ungrateful. They were kind, and I liked them. But Meredith was not himself."

"No, dear papa," replied May, sadly. "I suppose the world alters us all. He was the same and yet different."

"Can we have offended him?" asked the father.

This question was to be answered, ere long, by Meredith himself, who arrived about tea-time. May chanced to be out of the room when he came, so the two men had a brief tête-à-tête.

"My dear Meredith, I am thankful you have come," began Goldworthy. "We have been thinking and talking of nothing but you since our return here. We cannot understand in what way you are altered. Perhaps you can enlighten us."

"Altered? Really——" returned Meredith, and paused, colouring to his hair-roots.

"You see, my friend, there are changes so imperceptible that they can only be felt. A look, a word, a gesture conveys them, and yet you can lay hold of nothing tangible. Often it is a succession of negatives that arouses one's doubts. For instance, you have *not* written; you have *not* made an effort to join us; you have *not* kept alight the torch of friendship of your own free will. This for twelve months! Now that we have met again, you seem—forgive me if I am wrong—you seem reserved, cold, distant—altered, in

short. You know how sensitive my Madeline is, and how well she loves Cousin Meredith. Although she does not say so, I am assured that her tender soul is vexed. Have we offended you? and if so, how?"

This straightforward question perplexed Meredith. He hesitated, as he made an attempt to reply to it, stumbled, and fell, as those who hesitate often do. He found, to his surprise, that Mr. Goldworthy was not conscious of having given cause for his taking offence, and wondered if there really were one.

"I should be so glad to set it right before my Madeline comes in," suggested the anxious father. "I am tolerably indifferent to the fluctuations of friendship myself, but cannot endure that she should suffer from them."

"Then, sir, why did you take her from my house so suddenly?" broke out Meredith. "Why did you remove her, almost without explanation, from those who loved her dearly, although they were only homely countryfolk? She belongs to us, of right, almost more than to you. Her grandparents nurtured her, we all took her to our hearts, she loved us, and, but for the journey to London, would never have left us. Why must the people of the great world rob us of the little world of our fairest flowers?"

"Remember she is my daughter," said Goldworthy, humbly. "What you say pierces my heart, for I have done all you say. But, indeed, my friend, I meant no wrong. Even when I carried off her sweet mother, it was for love of her."

"And what of those from whom the branch is torn, sir? I leave her, like the sunshine, in my poor home; I return and find it empty and dark. I hear only that her father wills to remove her, and I—I can but believe that it is because he knows I love her."

"Meredith!" exclaimed Goldworthy, starting up and laying his hand on the young man's shoulder, "this is a misconception. I felt my old melancholy returning when you left us. I feared for Madeline—for myself. I wrote to Minister, who knows me, and he it was who arranged the foreign tour. If you but understood how well I loved her mother, sweet Mary Morrison, you might imagine how the streams, the hills, the woods, the very flowers of her native vales recalled her, and filled me with self-reproaches. They call me 'hipped,' and so I am; but it is by periodical returns of early memories. Hush! Here she comes. Scatter the clouds that lie between her and you as you will—as you will!"

"Cousin Meredith!" exclaimed May, as she came in. "Oh, I am glad!"

"All is well, my Madeline," said her father. "You and Meredith must take a walk together after tea."

And May knew, by Meredith's frank face and loving greeting, that all was well, and before the sun went down started with him for a ramble among the mountains.

(To be continued.)

USEFUL HINTS.

POTATO PIE.—Four pounds mashed potatoes. Lay at the bottom of a large pie-dish a layer of the potatoes, then a layer of meat cut in dice, sprinkle with breadcrumbs, a little thyme, pepper, and salt; moisten enough to soak the crumbs with a gravy made of the jelly from the meat, a little warm water, and a tablespoonful of sauce; another layer of potatoes; another of meat, crumbs, and gravy; another of potatoes. Rub over the top with a small piece of butter, and bake in a quick oven till the top is a golden brown.

BREAD AND MILK.—This may be made without boiling the milk, which very much deteriorates it, by simply breaking the bread into cold milk in a china vessel, which stand in a saucepan half full of cold water. Put it on to boil, and let it boil for five minutes say, then place it on the hob for a little while. The bread will become as soft as the finest pap, according to how long it is left on the hob (ten minutes at longest), and it will be found invaluable for very young children, especially if sick or delicate.

MAKING BREAD.

MUCH lighter bread can be made with what is called renewed yeast than with fresh-made yeast. If you buy one or two pennyworth of good baker's yeast, use half for your first batch of bread, and put away the other half in a tightly-corked bottle. Renew it an hour or two before making your bread by putting one tablespoonful of coarse sugar and three or four of flour to it, with as much water as will double the quantity. Beat up well and stand this in a warm place covered up, but not near enough to the fire to cake it. Make the bread always over night, leaving the dough well covered up in a pan only half full and in a warm room. By the morning it will have risen to the top of the pan, and you will only need to separate and shape the loaves, leaving them again to rise near a fire for one or two hours, as they require it. The dough must be kneaded in the first instance till it is perfectly elastic, and if made too dry and close it never will be that, so be particular about the amount of moisture.

It is easier to make light bread in summer than in winter. Renewed yeast may be kept (always saving half and repeating the process) for three months in cold weather or two in hot weather. If you only make bread once a week, stir a little sugar, flour, and water into it every third day, recorking the bottle, or it will lose its life.

AUSTRALIAN MEAT RECIPES.

PIE.—Two pounds of Australian meat, a few cold boiled potatoes (mashed), 1½ oz. tapioca, a little thyme, a teaspoonful of salt. Lay the meat in small pieces, roughly, in the pie-dish, put spoonfuls of the potatoes here and there amongst it, sprinkle the tapioca and thyme over the whole, and pour in a tablespoonful of sauce mixed with about a quarter of a pint of water. Cover with a crust made with Australian marrow (instead of lard or dripping). There is often enough fat in a three or four pound tin of Australian meat to make crust for a good-sized pie.

IMITATION MINCED VEAL.—One pint of milk, half-a-pint of water, rind of half a lemon, quarter of a large nutmeg, grated. Simmer the milk and water, and the lemon rind (minced finely), and the nutmeg, and a saltspoonful of salt gently for an hour. Mince two pounds of Australian mutton, taking care to cut *across* the grain of the meat. When wanted for table, thicken the milk, &c., with a small piece of butter rubbed smoothly into a tablespoonful of flour, and moistened to a cream with a tablespoonful of sauce and a little water, which pour into the milk, which must now be allowed to boil, just to thicken but no longer (stir, of course); add the minced mutton, let it stand two or three minutes to warm through, and serve with sippets.

IRISH STEW.—The same vegetables as generally used; add the Australian meat the last thing before dishing up. The most important point in serving tinned meat is to avoid cooking it a second time, as it is thoroughly cooked already.