

More plaudits, more flowers, yet she heeds nothing but those strangely familiar eyes. Suddenly her mind flashes to her father's portrait in the locket. Ah, that is the face she is so strongly reminded of! Great God, how like! Can it be? But the intensity of the thought chases the blood from her face, leaving it white as marble.

Bowing to the loud-applauding house she disappears swiftly behind the stage.

'Come, Meredith,' excitedly whispered Major Denison; 'I must see that girl at once.'

Meredith got up, and the two men made their way out of the hall. The concert was but half over, and their departure excited some notice.

Outside the door the Major paused.

'Her name?' he asked anxiously. 'I forgot to look at the programme.'

'It is Miss Rose Vestris. It may not be her real name, you know.'

'Rose—did you say Rose? Why, that was the child's name, Rose Agatha. Come quickly, Meredith, I feel it is she.'

Hastily they crossed to the back of the building. The attendant shook her head when they inquired for Miss Vestris.

'Miss Vestris was ill, but she would take up their cards.'

In a few minutes she returned saying Miss Vestris would see them in the manager's room.

Rosie, still in her white dress, was seated in a low chair when the two gentlemen entered. With a visible effort she rose and bowed.

Her pale face wore an anxious look as she waited for them to speak.

But Major Denison suddenly felt the delicacy of his task. It was not so easy a matter as he had thought to question a girl whom he had never met before as to her parentage, and his friend felt equally uncomfortable.

However, the Major at last mustered up courage.

'I crave your pardon, Miss Vestris, for thus intruding on you, but I feel compelled to put to you a few questions which I am sure you will answer frankly when I make myself known to you. I am the Major Denison who has figured so conspicuously in the papers lately.'

'Yes?' said Rosie inquiringly. She was trembling now. The thought that had been lurking doubtfully in her mind became at these words almost a conviction. Weak with emotion she sank into her chair.

'You know,' continued the Major, 'that I am trying to find my wife and daughter. Your voice is startlingly like my wife's, and Colonel Meredith says, and I cannot help agreeing with him, that you bear a striking resemblance to myself. We may be only jumping at wrong conclusions, of course, but you can set us right at once. Is Rose Vestris your real name?'

The girl was so agitated that for a moment she could not speak.

'I don't know,' she said at length in a tremulous voice, 'but I have never known another.'

'But you are not sure about it. You have a doubt as to its reality?'

Rosie paused; then said quietly:

'I will tell you how it is. My mother died when I was but a tiny child. Her name was Madame Vestris. I sometimes doubt that the name was her real one. I know of no relative—no friend even of my parents. But oh!'—with a sudden change of manner—'if you think I am your child—and I feel I am!—did you ever see this?' and with swift fingers she drew forth from her dress the locket which had been her mother's.

At sight of it he uttered an exclamation of recognition.

'Why, it is the locket I gave Isabel before our marriage.'

'Isabel!' repeated Rosie. 'And your name, sir?' she asked excitedly.

'Henry. "From Harry to Isabel" was inscribed on the back, and inside—'

'Is your photograph,' she said slowly, disclosing the miniature. 'How like,' cried Colonel Meredith. 'Denison, you have found your daughter.'

'Thank God,' said Denison reverently, as he folded the weeping Rosie to his breast and imparted a kiss on her brow.

'But the bitter is mingled with the sweet,' Major Denison said after a short silence, during which father and daughter gazed on each other with loving eyes. 'I had hoped to find my Isabel also. Child, tell me of her and of your own life. My poor little one,' he added, tenderly stroking the dark hair, 'without a single friend, what must your lot have been?'

The three sat down, and, her hand clasped in her father's, Rosie related the circumstances of her mother's death, as she had been told by the nuns and Mrs. Griffith. Her father was deeply shocked; his tears flowed unrestrainedly. Colonel Meredith was astonished to hear that the unfortunate singer whose sad end had so attracted his notice at the time was none other than the wife of his friend. If he had only known it the child would not have been friendless all these years.

Then Rosie told the simple story of her own life—how the nuns had adopted and educated her—how Rev. Mother had carefully kept everything which had belonged to her mother that might be a help in discovering her relative—how she had now at her lodgings the packet of letters and her own little garments marked 'Rosie D.'

'Rosie Denison, as I know now,' she concluded happily.

At this point the manager looked in, but seeing the room still occupied he told them not to disturb themselves, as he would leave orders with the porter not to lock the doors till they left.

'Oh, don't trouble yourself, sir,' said the Major, rising. 'We are going now, Meredith. Will you call a cab?'

'But I haven't yet changed my dress,' exclaimed Rosie. 'Well, what matter, I can put on my cloak over it.'

Meredith had the cab in waiting for them. At the Major's request he accompanied them to Rosie's lodgings. Half an hour later, with a grateful yet aching heart, Major Denison was looking at the packet of letters penned by himself nearly 18 years before. The chain of proofs seemed complete as it was, yet the morning's post, in the shape of the Rev. Mother's letter, added still stronger links. She little thought that Rosie would have found her father before that letter reached him.

CHAPTER V.

Major Denison had no trouble in proving legally—for on account of his estates such proof was necessary—that Rosie was his daughter.

The public grew enthusiastic when told that the young singer who had made such a hit on her first appearance had turned out to be the child so earnestly sought for.

Here was a romance in real life at last. Hundreds of sentimental maidens envied Rosie her good fortune, and wished that they had soldier fathers come back from the savages to find them grown into beautiful, dark-eyed sirens, with bewitching voices, and to take them away to a picturesque Welsh mansion, there to live as its mistress.

In spite of the laudatory comments which her beauty and her voice excited, Rosie was very humble under her changed fortunes, very happy too, as the Rev. Mother and Sister Angela knew, for from them she kept back nothing.

They knew that she was only too glad to give up the life of a professional singer, notwithstanding the brilliant future which seemed in store for her. She never had any real liking for the life, but Herr Scheren's persuasions, and the necessity she was under of earning a livelihood, had pointed it out as the one for which nature had best fitted her. And now she had given it all up with a light heart, though Herr Scheren's disappointment pained her not a little.

Poor man! It was a great blow to him, yet not without its consolations, for he had shared in Rosie's renown, and as the master who had trained her he had received much favourable notice in the Press, a fact which had determined him to settle down in London and 'take the ball at the hop,' to use a common phrase, and, I may add, that he had never reason to regret this change.

Rosie took kindly to her new situation. She learned to love her father tenderly, while his affection for her was apparent in every look and tone. Deprived of love during the best part of his manhood he seemed to live on it entirely now.

It was but natural that Rosie should have many suitors for her hand—she was a beautiful heiress—but none succeeded in touching her heart. Sometimes she wondered at this herself, and one day it flashed on her that she had no heart to give—that it was in her old home in the keeping of St. Angela for One who would some day claim it. This conviction grew on her daily. Her father noticed her new-born gravity and gently inquired its cause. Hesitatingly she told him. His face blanched as he listened, and a look of intense sadness crept into his eyes. But he was a true Catholic, and bade her go and find out God's Will. So she bared her heart to God's minister, who clearly saw that to her was given the special grace of a call to the religious life.

And she had thought that she would never be a nun! But that was before she had been tried—when there would have been no sacrifice to make. Now she had to sacrifice her father. Her poor father! How should she leave him? Then she pictured to herself the delight of Rev. Mother when she should hear the news.

To Major Denison it was sorrowful news, but he bore it like a Christian and a soldier. The sacrifice which God demanded he made with fortitude, nor thought Him hard to take away what He had so lately given. He often visits the convent, which is now in very truth his daughter's home, and when at Benediction he hears her glorious voice fill the chapel he feels that God has been good to him, and with a grateful heart inwardly joins in the 'Laudate.'—*Catholic Fireside*.

CURIOUS OLD CUSTOM.

IN Belfast there was until quite recently a curious old custom dating from quite two centuries ago. In the town there are two halls for selling linen, one of which is now used as offices, etc. This one is the Linen Hall proper, or White Linen Hall, in which the linen used to be sold unbleached, while bleached linen was sent to the former. A very long time ago some patriotic man endowed this Brown Linen Hall, so that it cannot be sold; and it was stipulated that a market was to be held every Friday. But when companies took up selling the linen, no one came to the old hall, so that it is now no longer of any use. Regularly, however, every Friday morning an old man opened the gates and put a single bale of unbleached linen up to auction. It was always the same old man, the linen was always the same bale, the time always the same, but no one ever came to buy, and very few people knew about it.

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