

CAMILLA

BY BEATRICE MAREAN,

Author of "The Tragedies of Oakhurst," "Won At Last," "Her Shadowed Life," "The Fireman's Heart," "When a Woman Loves," Etc., Etc.

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Respectfully Dedicated to
CAPT. AUGUSTUS OSWALD MACDONELL,
SENIOR,
of Jacksonville, Fla.
By
THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER XV.

RAPHAEL WHITHAM.

Raphael Whitham was a rising young journalist of Tallahassee. At the time of his introduction to our readers, he was editor and proprietor of "The Floridian," a large, well established journal, which had been published at the state capital for more than fifty years; bravely living through many trying vicissitudes through which the peninsula state had passed. Its clean pages had been a brave exponent of truth, an honest chronicler of facts, and a reliable medium through which the news of the day was transmitted to an appreciative public. Whitham's father before him had been editor and proprietor of the Floridian, and dying when he had scarcely passed the meridian of life, he left his unfinished work in the hands of his only son, then a young man just having reached his majority, and time proved that he had not left it in unworthy hands.

Young Whitham was born, reared, and educated in Tallahassee. Every picturesque hill, every stretch of woodland, and every acre of the broad plantations surrounding the city of his birth were dear to him as having been the play ground of the happy days of his boyhood. His love of nature amounted to worship and from its beauties he drew his happiest inspiration as a writer. In nature he saw the Creator's handiwork, and through it he drew closer to the great source of love and light, and in it breathed the air of a broader freedom.

In appearance he was tall and commanding, well built and sinewy. His face was alight with power and passion; rich in coloring, noble in features—a face to love and trust to the end of life. His hair was black as night with an inclination to lie in clusters; his brow full and rounded at the temples; his mouth firm but shapely—and his dark eyes beneath their straight black brows were both proud and thoughtful and had a golden gleam in their depths.

With Governor Murriatte the young journalist and writer was a prime favorite, and appreciating the young man's ability and character he saw in store for him a brilliant future. Mr. Whitham's invitation to visit Beaumont was a standing one, and he was always sure of a warm welcome whenever he turned his back upon his professional duties and betook himself to the hospitality of the governor's mansion. He had been introduced to Miss Bennett soon after her coming to Beaumont, as the young lady had been placed on terms of equality with the family and its guests.

"For Miss Bennett is a lady born and bred," kind hearted Mrs. Murritte had avowed. "If she were not we would not permit her to hold the position as teacher and constant companion to our daughter. To place her in this responsible position and then exclude her from our family circle, because she is using her talents wisely and industriously to maintain herself and live independent of financial aid not honestly earned, would be the very height of snobbishness."

Governor Murriatte was proud of his wife's good practical sense, and her kindness of heart that prompted this treatment of the orphan girl, whom he knew in his heart was worthy the respect and esteem of every one.

He had noted, with deep regret that of late his wife's conduct had been so cordial towards Miss Bennett.

He was at a loss to understand the change. "But then," he answered to himself, "Mrs. Murriatte, seems to be changed toward every one, even towards her own child." Clever and gifted politician and accomplished business man of the world, though he was, in this

one particular Governor Murriatte had proven himself to be very obtuse, indeed. The idea that a spark of jealousy would ever find lodgment in the noble heart of his beautiful wife, and above all improbable things, that she was jealous of Miss Bennett and himself, never once occurred to him when he was harrasing his brain to find a solution for her strange conduct.

CHAPTER XVI.

GOV. MURRIATTE DISCOVERS THE SECRET OF HIS WIFE'S UNHAPPINESS.

The golden beauty of June had glided into the mature beauty of July and the family at Beaumont began to make preparations for its annual summer outing to either the sea-shore or the mountain resorts, and as usual the choice of the place for the summer sojourn was left for Mrs. Murriatte to decide.

"It is immaterial to me," she said listlessly, when her husband consulted her wishes in regard to the matter, "For my part I should as soon remain at home as to go any where."

"This you know, you cannot do without injury to your health. You have remained at home too long already, as your nervousness and depression of spirits bear witness," Governor Murriatte said, half impatiently.

"It will take more than the mere change of scene and climate to make me happy," she said almost tearfully.

"Will you tell me what would restore your happiness, my wife?" he asked eager for her confidence.

"To have the perfect confidence restored to me that I once had in your love," she answered frankly.

"It certainly has been through no fault of mine that you have lost that confidence," he said. "It must be that your love for me has weakened, and that this is the cause of your lost confidence."

"I would to heaven that this were the case, but alas! I know that it is not," she said turning her face from him, and gazing with unhappy eyes upon the beautiful landscape outside her boudoir windows.

Governor Murriatte sighed deeply. This was the first conversation he had with his beautiful wife, in regard to the estrangement which to his most inexpressible grief, he felt was springing up between them.

Every effort he had made to discover the cause of the trouble had ended in defeat, and he felt the utter uselessness of pursuing the subject further at present. He walked toward the door as if to leave the room and then turning said:

"If you will not decide upon the place where you prefer to spend the summer, Alva, I must perforce decide for you; because the season is advancing rapidly and it is time that we were off."

"Perhaps, it might help you to make your decision if you were to consult Miss Bennett in regard to her wishes for the summer outing."

The proud, beautiful face with its lips disfigured by a sneer, had turned from the window with the words and was now confronting his own, while the jealous light which shone in the wife's eyes would have been obvious to even an indifferent and uninterested beholder.

He looked at her a moment in amazed silence, and then a wave of indignation mounted to his broad forehead.

"My wife dares insult me because she is my wife, although one would naturally suppose that above all sources on earth, a man might expect

of his bosom, we said were in our than in anger.

Mrs. Murriatte laughed scornfully and said:

"Why should my suggestion insult you? Miss Bennett, according to your own confession, was your protegee before she was brought into my house, and since her coming here

your tender solicitude for her welfare and happiness have not diminished; and this fact has become boldly apparent, even to as unsuspecting a person as myself. Why, then, can you deem that I have offered you an insult, merely because, being indifferent myself about the locality where we are to spend the summer, I suggested that you consult Miss Bennett upon the subject?"

Governor Murriatte looked at the speaker's shining eyes and glowing cheeks for a moment in silence, and then said:

"My wife, you are doing yourself as well as your husband an awful injustice. This conduct, which can have but one solution, should be far beneath you."

"And that solution?" she asked, with curling lips.

"Jealousy!" He hurled the word at her scornfully, while his eyes expressed the contempt for her weakness, that he would not permit his lips to utter; and she started back as if he had thrown a deadly missile at her.

"I am not jealous," she stoutly denied.

"I beg your pardon—you are."

"I am not!"

"Then will you kindly tell me the cause of your madness?" He strode up to her side as he put the question, and for the first time in his life looked into her face with anger blazing in his eyes.

"Ask that question of your own conscience, and you will get a truthful answer," she said, turning to the window.

He followed her, and pausing by her side said, commandingly:

"Alva, I demand that you relate to me just one instance wherein I have been remiss in my duty towards you."

She made no answer, and at length he continued:

"For months I have been distressed beyond measure by your evident unhappiness and coldness toward me. I have tried in every way to discover a cause for it, so as to remove the trouble if it were possible to do so. I signally failed in this so long that I had secretly given up ever being able to make the discovery. This afternoon it has been revealed to me when I least expected it, and I stand appalled before the knowledge of the cruel injustice that you have done me and the innocent young lady who is our daughter's governess."

She stood as motionless and as silent under his words as the marble statue of "Hebe" in the grounds below, upon which her eyes were fixed with a stony stare, and her husband continued:

"That you should become jealous of me after fifteen years of uninterrupted bliss, such as seldom falls to the lot of a married couple, and that the object of your jealousy should be, of all women, Miss Bennett, who is as pure and undefiled as your own innocent daughter, and who is young enough to be my daughter, passes my comprehension and fills me with unutterable grief. Speak, my darling, I implore you, and promise me that you will, with God's help, endeavor to rise above this weakness, which is so far beneath what your noble character has always been, and make me the happiest man on earth by restoring me to your perfect confidence."

"Can a man who is guilty plead like this?" she asked her aching heart, as she listened to his pleading words in stony silence.

"I will own that I have been jealous of you and Miss Bennett," she said at length, turning her face that had become very white, toward him.

"I have been very miserable and unhappy, I will admit, ever since I read Miss Bennett's extraordinary letter to you. But I have never before called the feelings I experienced by the odious name of jealousy."

"Did I not explain the contents of Miss Bennett's letter to your satisfaction?" he asked.

A planation was given, but doubts soon arose in my mind, which have lingered there, and which circumstances have daily strengthened, until my confidence in both you and Miss Bennett has been destroyed," she confessed.

"Alva, do you remember the word-

ed contents of Miss Bennett's letter?" he asked very gently.

"Perfectly; I could repeat every word of the letter," she answered readily.

"Well, tell me if you believe the expressions in that letter emanated from a vile heart?" he asked earnestly.

She silently studied the question for a moment and then said, frankly:

"No, I do not."

"Then why in the world did you permit the letter to worry you?" he asked.

"It was not the letter within itself but the mystery surrounding it that worked the mischief," she answered. "You admitted that you had known Miss Bennett, but when, or where, or under what circumstances you would not tell me; and you even exacted a promise from me that I would not speak to Miss Bennett upon the subject. If you will now explain more fully and make the matter clear to my mind, you will lift a great burden from my heart," she said, half pitifully.

"This I cannot do," he said. "I am in honor bound not to reveal more on the subject to anyone than I have told you, and I can only beg you to banish those doubts from your mind and again trust me fully."

"That is impossible," she said, sadly.

"Well, all that remains to be done is to dismiss Miss Bennett from your employment tomorrow; for I will not permit anyone to remain in my house whose presence gives you a moment's pain," he said.

The sun had set while this earnest conversation was passing between husband and wife, and the early gloom was wrapping the beautiful room in its dusky folds.

A sound of light footsteps and a snatch of gay song were heard in the wide hall outside, a tap fell on the door, and Imogen's young voice came floating into the room where the parents stood.

"Mother, are you there? The tea bell rang half an hour ago, and father has not come home."

The door flew open and the beautiful daughter of the house stood outlined in the bright light of the hall.

"Ah, here you are truant, both of you," she cried gaily, "come down please and let us have our tea."
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The picnic spirit is in air. There were several parties at Silver Springs Saturday spending the day fishing and picnicking, and in the afternoon there were two different parties out for a few hours. On Friday evening a party of the young crowd went down and spent the evening. Mrs. J. P. Campbell chaperoned the latter party.

"SOME FLORIDA INCIDENTS."

The column devoted to these "incidents" is becoming the most popular we have ever printed.

We have three or four well written incidents in hand from "Old Timer" three most excellent ones from Mr. O. T. Green, of this city, who as a narrator of incidents, especially along the line of humor, is extremely clever; we have one in hand from ex-Governor Fleming entitled: "Steambotting on the St. Johns River in Early Days," and the same gentleman promises us a description of the "Battle of the Natural Bridge;" Mrs. Ellen Call Long will continue her contributions on the "Old Tallahassee Feuds;" Col. T. P. Lloyd, of Inverness, will furnish some incidents relating to the early days of Hernando county, and Mr. John G. Reardon will add piquancy to the column by bright emanations from his pen. Judge Wall, and others, also promise contributions.

Altogether this feature of the paper will be thoroughly interesting and will be entirely along original lines.

These incidents will continue all through the year.

Strikes Hidden Rocks.

When your ship of health strikes the hidden rocks of consumption pneumonia, etc., you are lost, if you don't get help from Dr. King's New Discovery for Consumption. J. W. McKinnon, of Talladega Springs, Ala., writes: "I had been ill with pneumonia, under the care of two doctors, but was getting no better when I began to take Dr. King's New Discovery. The first dose gave relief, and one bottle cured me. Sure cure for sore throat, bronchitis, coughs and colds. Guaranteed at Tydings & Co. Drug Store price 50c and \$1.00. Trial bottle free."

The Ocklawaha Lumber Company Changes Hands

Mr. J. G. Daniels, of Georgia and Mr. P. R. Lester, of this city, owners of the Ocklawaha Lumber Company at Silver Springs, who for some months have been on a deal to sell the same to northern capitalists, have finally consummated the trade, the deals being passed several days ago. The purchase price was something like a hundred thousand dollars.

The gentlemen who have purchased this fine property are from Minnesota and will move to this city. The deal was made through the Blount Real Estate Agency.

The famous Dodge will case in Jacksonville has finally been settled. Mrs. Dodge died about a year ago and willed the bulk of her fortune to Rev. A. M. MacDonald. The relatives contested the will but the will was held to be valid and Mr. MacDonald will receive his fortune.

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