

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 XXVI.
BACK TO THE CONVENT'S SHELTERING FOLD.

Miss Bennett burst into a violent fit of weeping when she had finished reading Governor Murriatte's letter.

"There was no message left for me from any one and I loved them all so dearly," she sobbed.

Mrs. Cameron mingled her tears with those of the unhappy girl and tried to comfort her.

"There was no message left for any one, except those pertaining to business, my dear," she said as she drew the orphan's head to her own motherly bosom, and wiped her tears away. "Think of how Imogen and Ray have loved each other all their lives, and she left no token of any kind to comfort him in his sorrow at losing her, or to give him one ray of hope that he shall ever see her again. The poor boy is quite broken hearted over the whole mysterious affair."

And thus the two women talked and wondered, while poor Ray paced the length of the long drawingroom below in an agony of suspense and anxiety.

Mrs. Cameron and her son decided to remain at Beaumont a few days to see if any news came of the absent family.

"I feel as if Governor Murriatte had made me responsible for the house and everything about it," Mrs. Cameron said to her husband as he was preparing to return home without her.

"Very well, my love," he said, "it will be best for you to take charge of everything for a week and if the family does not return or advise us further we will proceed to carry out Governor Murriatte's requests to the best of our ability. But there is some great mystery underlying all this to which there is no clue at present. I am grieved to see Ray take the matter so seriously to heart. Why the boy must be in love with the Governor's daughter."

"He has always been in love with Imogen ever since she was an infant, and no wonder for she is the sweetest and prettiest girl I ever saw. But he is young and he will get over it. We will travel with him this summer and in the fall will place him in college, and if he never meets Imogen again he will learn to forget her," philosophized Mrs. Cameron.

Ah! how little did the fond mother understand the loyal and noble character of her only and idolized child, or the depth of love which had taken possession of his young heart for his former playmate.

A week passed gloomily by for the anxious watchers at Beaumont, and no news came to relieve their anxiety. Then the Camerons proceeded to comply with Governor Murriatte's written requests.

The check calling for one thousand dollars was cashed; the servants were paid their wages and discharged; the beautiful horses and cows and poultry, were placed on the market to be sold, and a silence and desolation began to settle down on the once happy home.

When Mrs. Cameron offered Miss Bennett the six hundred dollars which Governor Murriatte had mentioned were due her as her year's salary, the girl waved it aside: "Governor Murriatte owes me nothing," she declared.

"My dear," remonstrated the elder lady, "Governor Murriatte said expressly in his letter to me that this sum is due you for services rendered his daughter, and you will be very unwise indeed if you refuse to accept it. You are now homeless and you will need the money. You have never been thrown penniless upon the cruel and cold-hearted world, and you know nothing of the wretched trials to be endured by a young girl in your position. With this

money which you have honestly earned you may live in independence and comfort until you shall be able to secure another position."

Miss Bennet shook her head with great decision, "I cannot take it!" she cried. "It would bring me sorrow should I do so. Dear friend I appreciate your thoughtfulness, and kind care, but I must not take the money."

"And why not? do explain to me child why you must not take the money. You have earned it honestly," Mrs. Cameron said half impatiently. Miss Bennett covered her face with her hands and burst into bitter weeping.

"I cannot explain without betraying confidence reposed in me by my best and kindest friend, and this I know you will not ask me to do."

Mrs. Cameron, sighed heavily as she replaced the bank notes in the pocket book and silently left the room.

"Did you ever hear of anything like this?" she exclaimed to her husband whom she met in the hall and to whom she related the incident.

"My dear," he said with a comical look on his good natured face, "A spirit of insanity is turned loose in Beaumont. Let us hurry up and leave here lest we ourselves be its next victims. I have already sent Ray home and forbade him to return. The poor boy looks as if he had lost every friend he had on earth. Will Miss Bennett not come with us?"

I urged her to do so, but she says she will return to the convent at St. Augustine and remain there until she has recovered her strength, and then she will seek another position. Why! was that not a ring at the door bell?" she asked starting suddenly.

"Yes!"

"Well do run down and see who it is," "my dear," she said. "Perhaps it is some one with good news at last."

Mr. Cameron hurried away, and his wife came down on the first landing and looking over the balustrade watched her husband as he opened the door, and saw a negro boy hand him a letter.

"Mr. Ray say fer ter bring dis letter to Miss Bennett."

"All right, I will see that the young lady gets the letter," Mr. Cameron said, closing the door and starting quickly up stairs.

"What is it dear?" his wife half whispered as she came down stairs to meet him.

He handed her the letter, "Ray sent it to Miss Bennett," he explained.

Mrs. Cameron looked and exclaimed: "It is mailed at St. Louis, and Oh Albert, it is addressed in Mrs. Murriatte's hand writing and sent in my care. Now at last we shall have news from them."

She turned and hastening up stairs carried the letter to Miss Bennett's room.

"The darkest hour is just before day, my dear," she cried cheerfully. "Here is a letter from Mrs. Murriatte and I am sure it will explain everything."

Miss Bennett took the letter with an eager hand, and a glow of happiness chased for one moment the shadow of pain and sorrow from the young face.

With the rare delicacy of feeling characteristic of that gentle lady Mrs. Cameron went softly from the room and closed the door behind her, while Miss Bennett drew the precious letter from its envelope with hands trembling from the excessive emotions of joy which filled her heart read:

ST. LOUIS, MO., July 17, 18—

MISS BENNETT:—

"By the merest accident I discovered your perfidy. For one year I have suspected you, but having no conclusive evidence, I gave you the benefit of the doubt. When least expecting it your baseness was revealed to me in all its hideousness, and I shudder when I think that for two years you were the confidential companion

of my innocent young daughter. The child loved and trusted you, and you repaid her by perpetrating a wrong against her that is worse than murder.

"You have separated her parents and wrecked a home which before darkened by your sin was pure and happy.

"I do not curse you, God will do that and rest assured that his vengeance will overtake you.

ALVA MURRIATTE."

"Oh, mother of God, protect me!" cried the poor girl, as she dropped upon her knees and made the sign of the cross upon her breast.

"Holy Mother save me from the snares of the unrighteous!" she prayed, "and from those who falsely accuse me, for my Savor Jesus Christ's sake."

A light tap fell on the door and the girl sprang to her feet. She knew the tap came from Mrs. Cameron who was so anxious to hear news from the absent ones. Should she tell her the awful contents of that letter lying on the carpet at her feet? she had asked her broken heart. "Oh, blessed Virgin, what shall I do? What shall I do?" She clasped her hands and raised her eyes towards heaven in devout supplication, while her lips continued to move in agonizing prayer.

The rap on the door was repeated and Mrs. Cameron's voice sounded outside. "May I come in, Miss Bennett?"

The girl stooped, picked up the letter, hid it in the folds of her dress and anxiously opened the door.

"Why, dear," exclaimed Mrs. Cameron, "you were as quiet as a mouse. I began to think you had left the room. But tell me, did your letter contain good news, or give any explanation of the mystery?"

"Neither," Miss Bennett replied in a firm voice. "Mrs. Cameron, if you are my friend help me to leave this house before I go mad," she continued passionately, and the deperate light that sprang into her tearless eyes denoted how near the verge of madness the girl really was.

"Certainly, my dear," Mrs. Cameron said, soothingly; "you shall go at once if you wish. But come home with me," she entreated, "until you grow stronger."

"I cannot, dear friend, I cannot! Help me to return at once to the convent, will you not?" she entreated, passionately. "There is an eight o'clock train this evening, help me to reach it and God will bless you for your kindness."

"You shall go, my child," Mrs. Cameron said pityingly.

"It is now seven o'clock and our horse and buggy stands at the gate, we will take you to the depot and see you off. But have you no preparations to make?"

"None whatever but to put on my hat and gloves; my baggage is at the depot, and has been there since the day of my accident."

She gave a shuddering sigh, and clashed her cold hands tightly together, and Mrs. Cameron hastened away to find her husband.

In an other hour the cars were bearing the pale-faced girl back to the sacred shades of Saint Joseph's convent.

"Dear Mother!" she cried when she stood in the presence of the Mother Superior, "I have had enough of the world, and I pray the holy Virgin that you will take me back to your heart, and permit me to spend the remainder of my life with you, consecrated to God's service."

The good mother extended her arms toward the returning wanderer and like a broken white lily, the girl fell into them in a deathlike swoon.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Creeping Death.

Blood poison creeps up towards the heart causing death. J. E. Stearns Belle Plaine, Minn., writes that a friend dreadfully injured his hand, which swelled up like blood poisoning. Bucklen's Arnica Salve drew out the poison, healed the wound and saved his life. Best in the world for burns and sores. 25c at Tyding & Co., druggists.

Taken Up

At Townsend & Co's turpentine camp near Norwalk, one brown mare mule fourteen hands high, seems to be about fifteen years old. Owner can get same at Townsend's turpentine camp. 4 28 tf

Talk about hot weather in Florida during the months of July and August, but there are no icicles growing here during the merry month of May.

SCYPTERS TWAIN.

Written for the Ocala Banner.
Woman, since the world began,
Queen of love and beauty,
See in me your vassel, man,
Come to proffer duty.

Roses red are in her cheeks,
Lillies on her brow;
Every tint the painter seeks,
Nature doth endow.

Sweep the curtain from the past,—
She is worthy of all love;
From now unto that day the last,
Woman's heart is treasure trove.

Quick her teardrops are to form,
Quicker comes her laughter;
Like a summer Alpine storm,
And the sunshine after.

When the south wind murmurs low—
Softer is her sigh;
Friends may come and turn and go,
Love will not deny.

Great is she in loveliness,
Greater in her love;
Scypters twain she sways to bless,—
Life to brighten, Heaven to prove.

Once I loved a maiden fair,
Then the silence shut her in;
Now all women haloes wear,
As benefits her sister kin.

Woman, since the world began
Queen of love and beauty,
Still retain your vassel, man,
And munele joy with duty.

—LEON HANLON.

Rev. W. H. Gottwald, formerly the Presbyterian pastor in this city, who has been spending the past six weeks in Ocala visiting his many friends here, left Monday for his home in Washington, D. C. Dr. Gottwald delivered several sermons during his stay in Ocala, and all were delighted with them.

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Eureka N. C. Apple Brandy	4.75	4.75	7.00	14.00
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Eureka N. C. Corn, XX	4.00	4.00	6.00	12.00
Eureka N. C. Peach Brandy	4.75	4.75	7.00	14.00
N. C. Peach Brandy	3.25	3.25	4.50	9.70
Eureka N. C. Corn, XXX	3.25	3.25	4.50	9.70
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