

# **Heartsease or Brother's Wife**

**by**

**Charlotte Mary Yonge**

**[Web-Books.Com](http://Web-Books.Com)**

# Heartsease or Brother's Wife

Chapter I.1.....	4
Chapter I.2.....	8
Chapter I.3.....	23
Chapter I.4.....	35
Chapter I.5.....	45
Chapter I.6.....	57
Chapter II.1.....	65
Chapter II.2.....	76
Chapter II.3.....	91
Chapter II.4.....	104
Chapter II.5.....	111
Chapter II.6.....	117
Chapter II.7.....	125
Chapter II.8.....	135
Chapter II.9.....	147
Chapter II.10.....	161
Chapter II.11.....	175
Chapter II.12.....	187
Chapter II.13.....	191
Chapter II.14.....	201
Chapter II.15.....	213
Chapter II.16.....	222
Chapter II.17.....	236
Chapter II.18.....	249
Chapter II.19.....	253
Chapter II.20.....	262
Chapter II.21.....	269
Chapter II.22.....	276
Chapter II.23.....	289
Chapter III.1.....	299
Chapter III.2.....	306
Chapter III.3.....	310
Chapter III.4.....	321
Chapter III.5.....	330
Chapter III.6.....	338
Chapter III.7.....	343
Chapter III.8.....	350
Chapter III.9.....	355
Chapter III.10.....	365
Chapter III.11.....	376
Chapter III.12.....	387

Chapter III.13.....	396
Chapter III.14.....	407
Chapter III.15.....	413
Chapter III.16.....	421
Chapter III.17.....	427
Chapter III.18.....	435

## Chapter I.1

And Maidens call them Love in Idleness.

Midsummer Night's Dream

### Chapter 1

There are none of England's daughters that bear a prouder presence.

\*\*\*\*\*

And a kingly blood sends glances up, her princely eye to trouble,  
And the shadow of a monarch's crown is softened in her hair.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

The sun shone slanting over a spacious park, the undulating ground here turning a broad lawn towards the beams that silvered every blade of grass; there, curving away in banks of velvet green; shadowed by the trees; gnarled old thorns in the holiday suit whence they take their name, giant's nosegays of horse-chestnuts, mighty elms and stalwart oaks, singly or in groups, the aristocracy of the place; while in the background rose wooded coverts, where every tint of early green blended in rich masses of varied foliage.

An avenue, nearly half a mile in length, consisted of a quadruple range of splendid lime trees of uniform growth, the side arcades vaulted over by the meeting branches, and the central road, where the same lights and shadows were again and again repeated, conducting the eye in diminishing perspective to a mansion on a broad base of stone steps. Herds of cattle, horses, and deer, gave animation to the scene, and near the avenue were a party of village children running about gathering cowslips, or seated on the grass, devouring substantial plum buns.

Under a lordly elm sat a maiden of about nineteen years; at her feet a Skye terrier, like a walking door-mat, with a fierce and droll countenance, and by her side a girl and boy, the one sickly and poorly clad, the other with bright inquiring eyes, striving to compensate for the want of other faculties. She was teaching them to form that delight of childhood, a cowslip ball, the other children supplying her with handfuls of the gold-coated flowers, and returning a pull of the forelock or a bobbed curtsey to her smiling thanks.

Her dress was of a plain brown-holland looking material, the bonnet she had thrown off was of the coarsest straw, but her whole air declared her the daughter of that lordly house; and had gold and rubies been laid before her instead of cowslips with fairy favours, they would well have become her princely port, long neck, and stately head, crowned with a braid of her profuse black hair. That regal look was more remarkable in her than beauty; her brow was too high, her features not quite regular, her complexion of gypsy darkness, but with a glow of eyes very large, black, and deeply set, naturally grave in expression, but just now beaming and dancing in accordance with the encouraging smiles on her fresh, healthy, red lips, as her hands, very soft and delicate, though of large and strong make, completed the ball, threw it in the little boy's face, and laughed to see his ecstasy over the delicious prize; teaching him to play with it, tossing it backwards

and forwards, shaking him into animation, and ever and anon chasing her little dog to extract it from between his teeth.

Suddenly she became aware of the presence of a spectator, and instantly assuming her bonnet, and drawing up her tall figure, she exclaimed, in a tone of welcome:

'Oh, Mr. Wingfield, you are come to see our cowslip feast.'

'There seems to be great enjoyment,' replied the young curate, looking, however, somewhat pre-occupied.

'Look at Charlie Layton,' said she, pointing to the dumb boy. 'That ball is perfect felicity, he had rather not play with it, the delight is mere possession.' She was turning to the boy again, when Mr. Wingfield said, not without hesitation--'You have not heard when to expect your party from Madeira?'

'You know we cannot hear again. They were to sail by the next packet, and it is uncertain how soon they may arrive.'

'And--and--your brother Arthur. Do you know when he comes home?'

'He promised to come this spring, but I fancy Captain Fitzhugh has inveigled him somewhere to fish. He never writes, so he may come any day. But what--is anything the matter?'

'I have a letter here that--which--in Lord Martindale's absence, I thought it might be better--you might prefer my coming direct to you. I cannot but think you should be aware'--stammered Mr. Wingfield.

'Well,'--she said, haughtily.

'Here is a letter from my cousin, who has a curacy in the Lake country. Your brother is at Wrangerton, the next town.'

'Arthur is well?' cried she, starting.

'Yes, yes, you need not be alarmed, but I am afraid there is some entanglement. There are some Miss Mosses--'

'Oh, it is that kind of thing!' said she, in an altered tone, her cheeks glowing; 'it is very silly of him to get himself talked about; but of course it is all nothing.'

'I wish I could think so,' said Mr. Wingfield; 'but, indeed, Miss Martindale,' for she was returning to the children, 'I am afraid it is a serious matter. The father is a designing person.'

'Arthur will not be taken in,' was her first calm answer; but perceiving the curate unconvinced, though unwilling to contradict, she added, 'But what is the story?'

Mr. Wingfield produced the letter and read; 'Fanshawe, the curate of Wrangerton, has just been with me, telling me his rector is in much difficulty and perplexity about a son of your parishioner, Lord Martindale. He came to Wrangerton with another guardsman for the sake of the fishing, and has been drawn into an engagement with one of the daughters of old Moss, who manages the St. Erme property. I know nothing against the young ladies, indeed Fanshawe speaks highly of them; but the father is a disreputable sort of attorney, who has taken advantage of Lord St. Erme's absence and neglect to make a prey of the estate. The marriage is to take place immediately, and poor Mr. Jones is in much distress at the dread of being asked to perform the ceremony, without the consent of the young man's family.'

'He cannot do it,' exclaimed the young lady; 'you had better write and tell him so.'

'I am afraid,' said Mr. Wingfield, diffidently, 'I am afraid he has no power to refuse.'

'Not in such a case as this? It is his duty to put a stop to it.'

'All that is in his power he will do, no doubt, by reasoning and remonstrance; but you must remember that your brother is of age, and if the young lady's parents consent, Mr. Jones has no choice.'

'I could not have believed it! However, it will not come to that: it is only the old rector's fancy. To make everything secure I will write to my brother, and we shall soon see him here.'

'There is still an hour before post-time,' said Mr. Wingfield; 'shall I send the children home?'

'No, poor little things, let them finish their game. Thank you for coming to me. My aunt will, I hope, hear nothing of it. Good evening.'

Calling an elder girl, she gave some directions; and Mr. Wingfield watched her walking down the avenue with a light-footed but decided and characteristic tread, expressing in every step, 'Where I am going, there I will go, and nothing shall stop me.'

'Nonsense!' she said to herself; 'Arthur cannot be so lost to the sense of everything becoming. Such pain cannot be in store for me! Anything else I could bear; but this must not, cannot, shall not be. Arthur is all I have; I cannot spare him; and to see him shipwrecked on a low-bred designing creature would be too much misery. Impossible--so clear-headed as he is, so fastidious about women! And yet this letter spoke decidedly. People talk of love! and Arthur is so easy, he would let himself be drawn on rather than make a disturbance. He might be ensnared with his eyes open, because he disliked the trouble of breaking loose, and so would not think of the consequence. Nothing could save him so well as some one going to him. He can read a letter or not as he chooses. Oh, if papa were at home--oh, if Mr. Wingfield were but Percy Fotheringham--he who fears no man, and can manage any one! Oh! if I could go myself; he heeds me when he heeds no one else. Shall I go? Why not? It would save him; it would be the only effectual way. Let me see. I would take Simmonds and Pauline. But then I must explain to my aunt. Stuff! there are real interests at stake! Suppose this is exaggeration--why, then, I should be ridiculous, and Arthur would never forget it. Besides, I believe I cannot get there in one day--certainly not return the same. I must give way to conventionalities, and be a helpless young lady.'

She reached the house, and quickly dashed off her letter:--

'My Dear Arthur,--I hope and trust this letter may be quite uncalled for, though I feel it my duty to write it. I used to have some influence with you, and I should think that anything that reminded you of home would make you pause.

'Report has of course outrun the truth. It is impossible you should be on the brink of marriage without letting us know--as much so, I should trust, as your seriously contemplating an engagement with one beneath your notice. I dare say you find it very pleasant to amuse yourself; but consider, before you allow yourself to form an attachment--I will not say before becoming a victim to sordid speculation. You know what poor John has gone through, though there was no inferiority there. Think what you would have to bear for the sake, perhaps, of a pretty face, but of

a person incapable of being a companion or comfort, and whom you would be ashamed to see beside your own family. Or, supposing your own affections untouched, what right have you to trifle with the feelings of a poor girl, and raise expectations you cannot and ought not to fulfil? You are too kind, when once you reflect, to inflict such pain, you, who cannot help being loved. Come away while it is time; come home, and have the merit of self-sacrifice. If your fancy is smitten, it will recover in its proper sphere. If it costs you pain, you know to whom you have always hitherto turned in your vexations. Dear Arthur, do not ruin yourself; only come back to me. Write at once; I cannot bear the suspense.

'Your most affectionate sister,

'THEODORA A. MARTINDALE.'

She made two copies of this letter; one she directed to 'The Hon. Arthur Martindale, Grenadier Guards, Winchester;' the other, 'Post- Office, Wrangerton.' In rather more than a week she was answered:--

'My Dear Theodora,--You judged rightly that I am no man to trifle, or to raise expectations which I did not mean to fulfil. My wife and I are at Matlock for a few days before joining at Winchester.

'Your affectionate brother,

'ARTHUR N. MARTINDALE,'

## Chapter I.2

She's less of a bride than a bairn,  
She's ta'en like a colt from the heather,  
With sense and discretion to learn.  
A chiel maun be patient and steady  
That yokes with a mate in her teens.

Woo'd and Married and A'

JOANNA BAILLIE

A gentleman stood waiting at the door of a house not far from the Winchester barracks.

'Is my brother at home, James?' as the servant gave a start of surprise and recognition.

'No, sir; he is not in the house, but Mrs.--; will you walk in? I hope I see you better, sir.'

'Much better, thank you. Did you say Mrs. Martindale was at home?'

'Yes, sir; Mr. Arthur will soon be here. Won't you walk in?'

'Is she in the drawing-room?'

'No, I do not think so, sir. She went up-stairs when she came in.'

'Very well. I'll send up my card,' said he, entering, and the man as he took it, said, with emphasis, and a pleading look, 'She is a very nice young lady, sir,' then opened a room door.

He suddenly announced, 'Mr. Martindale,' and that gentleman unexpectedly found himself in the presence of a young girl, who rose in such confusion that he could not look at her as he shook her by the hand, saying, 'Is Arthur near home?'

'Yes--no--yes; at least, he'll come soon,' was the reply, as if she hardly knew what her words were.

'Were you going out?' he asked, seeing a bonnet on the sofa.

'No, thank you,--at least I mean, I'm just come in. He went to speak to some one, and I came to finish my letter. He'll soon come,' said she, with the rapid ill-assured manner of a school-girl receiving her mamma's visitors.

'Don't let me interrupt you,' said he, taking up a book.

'O no, no, thank you,' cried she, in a tremor lest she should have been uncivil. 'I didn't mean--I've plenty of time. 'Tis only to my home, and they have had one by the early post.'

He smiled, saying, 'You are a good correspondent.'

'Oh! I must write. Annette and I were never apart before.'

'Your sister?'

'Yes, only a year older. We always did everything together.'

He ventured to look up, and saw a bright dew on a soft, shady pair of dark eyes, a sweet quivering smile on a very pretty mouth, and a glow of pure bright deep pink on a most delicately fair skin, contrasted with braids of dark brown hair. She was rather above the ordinary height, slender, and graceful, and the childish beauty of the form or face and features surprised him; but to his mind the chief grace was the shy, sweet tenderness, happy and bright, but tremulous with the



recent pain of the parting from home. With a kindly impulse, he said, 'You must tell me your name, Arthur has not mentioned it.'

'Violet;' and as he did not appear at once to catch its unusual sound, she repeated, 'Violet Helen; we most of us have strange names.'

'Violet Helen,' he repeated, with an intonation as if struck, not unpleasingly, by the second name. 'Well, that is the case in our family. My sister has an uncommon name.'

'Theodora,' said Violet, pausing, as if too timid to inquire further.

'Have you only this one sister?' he said.

'Six, and one brother,' said she, in a tone of exulting fondness. A short silence, and then the joyful exclamation, 'There he is!' and she sprang to the door, leaving it open, as her fresh young voice announced, full of gratulation, 'Here's your brother.'

'Guileless and unconscious of evil, poor child!' thought the brother; 'but I wonder how Arthur likes the news.'

Arthur entered, a fine-looking young man, of three-and-twenty, dark, bright complexioned, tall, and robust. He showed not the least consciousness of having offended, and his bride smiled freely as if at rest from all embarrassment now that she had her protector.

'Well, John,' was his greeting, warmly spoken. 'You here? You look better. How is the cough?'

'Better, thank you.'

'I see I need not introduce you,' said Arthur, laying his hand on the arm of his blushing Violet, who shrank up to him as he gave a short laugh. 'Have you been here long?'

'Only about five minutes.'

'And you are come to stay?'

'Thank you, if you can take me in for a day or two.'

'That we can. There is a tolerable spare room, and James will find a place for Brown. I am glad to see you looking so much better. Have you got rid of the pain in your side?'

'Entirely, thank you, for the last few weeks.'

'How is my mother?'

'Very well. She enjoyed the voyage extremely.'

'She won't concoct another Tour?'

'I don't think so,' said John, gravely.

'There has SHE,' indicating his wife, been thinking it her duty to read the old Italian one, which I never opened in my life. I declare it would take a dictionary to understand a page. She is scared at the variety of tongues, and feels as if she was in Babel.'

John was thinking that if he did not know this rattling talk to be a form of embarrassment, he should take it for effrontery.

'Shall I go and see about the room?' half-whispered Violet.

'Yes, do;' and he opened the door for her, exclaiming, almost before she was fairly gone, 'There! you want no more explanation.'

'She is very lovely!' said John, in a tone full of cordial admiration.

'Isn't she?' continued Arthur, triumphantly. 'Such an out-of-the-way style;--the dark eyes and hair, with that exquisite complexion, ivory fairness,--the form of her face the perfect oval!--what you so seldom see--and her figure, just the right height, tall and taper! I don't believe she could be awkward if she was to try. She'll beat every creature hollow, especially in a few years' time when she's a little more formed.'

'She is very young?'

'Sixteen on our wedding-day. That's the beauty of it. If she had been a day older it would have been a different thing. Not that they could have spoilt her,--she is a thoroughbred by nature, and no mistake.'

'How did your acquaintance begin?'

'This way,' said Arthur, leaning back, and twirling a chair on one of its legs for a pivot. 'Fitzhugh would have me come down for a fortnight's fishing to Wrangerton. There's but one inn there fit to put a dog to sleep in, and when we got there we found the house turned out of window for a ball, all the partitions down on the first floor, and we driven into holes to be regaled with distant fiddle-squeak. So Fitzhugh's Irish blood was up for a dance, and I thought I might as well give in to it, for the floor shook so that there was no taking a cigar in peace. So you see the stars ordained it, and it is of no use making a row about one's destiny,' concluded Arthur, in a sleepy voice, ceasing to spin the chair.

'That was your first introduction?'

'Ay. After that, one was meeting the Mosses for ever; indeed, we had to call on the old fellow to get leave for fishing in that water of Lord St. Erme's. He has a very pretty sort of little place out of the town close to the park, and--and somehow the weather was too bright for any sport, and the stream led by their garden.'

'I perceive,' said John.

'Well, I saw I was in for it, and had nothing for it but to go through with it. Anything for a quiet life.'

'A new mode of securing it,' said John, indignant at his nonchalance.

'There you don't display your wonted sagacity,' returned Arthur coolly. 'You little know what I have gone through on your account. If you had been sound-winded, you would have saved me no end of persecution.'

'You have not avoided speculation as it is,' John could not help saying.

'I beg to observe that you are mistaken. Old Moss is as cunning a fox as ever lived; but I saw his game, and without my own good-will he might have whistled for me. I saw what he was up to, and let him know it, but as I was always determined that when I married it should be to please myself, not my aunt, I let things take their course and saved the row at home.'

'I am sure she knew nothing of this.'

'She? Bless you, poor child. She is as innocent as a lamb, and only thinks me all the heroes in the world.'

'She did not know my father was ignorant of it?'

'Not she. She does not know it to this day.' John sat thinking; Arthur twirled the chair, then said, 'That is the fact. I suppose my aunt had a nice story for you.'

'It agreed in the main with yours.'

## Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

