

**MAUDINE  
LÄRIVEN**

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Maudine Läriven by Mary Thomas

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**MARY THOMAS**

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# ...MAUDINE LÄRIVEN...

♦♦♦♦

BY

MARY THOMAS

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## Maudine Läriven.

### PART I.

**T**WAS summer. The forest, the lake and the dell  
Seemed vying with each their own story to tell.  
While that night over all lay shimmering gleams  
Of a silver moon, like a maiden's fair dreams.

The breeze, as it passed with a sigh through the leaves,  
Seemed to whisper of things no mortal e'er sees.  
For too short is the sight, too fleeting the years,  
To grasp all of Nature before life is o'er.  
For ages she has lived, and sung her wild song:  
We live but a moment, and then in the throng  
Of this busy world, too absorbed in its bills  
To give ear to music of Nature's fair wills.  
For to each there is given a harp yet unstrung:  
It is ours to string, and the music's begun.  
She never refuses, from out her rich mine,  
To give to the soul all the songs it would find.

Maudine Läriven, on this calm summer night,  
Was trying to string this life-harp aright:  
With none to suggest, and by none be advised,  
It was hers to solve the dim future disguised.

### MAUDINE LARIVEN

An orphan, and reared by two brave, honest hearts,  
Of some distant kin, who thought that life's start  
Was only a husband, a home and some pelf,  
And then should a girl be content with herself.

Maudine, as she sat in the moon's gentle ray,  
Thus lost in the spell of the fast-dying day,  
And dreaming those dreams that are food for the young,  
Before Care, with grim face and withering tongue,  
Bids the dreams all depart: then serves up the strife,  
Thus passing us on o'er the stages of life:  
With hope for the foot-light, men's praises the goal,  
At last falls the curtain—the grave and its mold.  
Now into this life, as the dreams came and went,  
There stole a soft voice, by our bold Nature sent:  
"Leave existence for others who only grope  
In the dull, dead paths, never reaching the slope  
Of life's intentions ideal. On heights far above  
This clamor, this strife and this base, human love,  
There's a throne that awaits with Fame's brilliant hues  
All those who attempt and will pay the just dues.  
The path is not easy, and often 'tis dark:  
But hope, a companion, will lend a bright spark.  
And when once your feet on the heights you have pressed,  
And over your brow shall the laurel wreath rest,  
God smiles on the effort. Then trials and strife  
Seem naught when compared with this radiant life."  
Maudine rose with a start. What wild dream was this?



## MAUDINE LARIVEN

That echoing voice, like some will-o-the-wisp,  
Was luring her onward to marshes unseen.  
But, oh! could it ever be more than a dream?  
The breeze through the forest continued to sigh:  
The lake's placid bosom reflected the sky:  
And the moon's pale face gently sank to its rest,  
Leaving only a gleam in the distant west.  
While over the pillow of Maudine's fair head  
No poppies were shaken, she onward was led  
By the force of that voice, its strength and its will,  
And try as she would it haunted her still.

Aurora's soft tread awakened the flowers,  
Shook from their petals their dew-laden dowers.  
Morning, now gay in her crystalized splendor,  
Peeped through the blinds of the grey cottage window,  
And over the couch, where Maudine lay sleeping,  
Spread her mantle of gold: sunlight came creeping  
And bathed the fair head, the white brow, and the cheek  
With fresh golden rays. Maudine woke with a shriek.  
The dream of the night with phantasy's power,  
Led through dreamland her steps to Fame's lofty tower,  
And there, as she waited her trophy to find,  
Fame's rays were too great, she awoke to be blind.  
And her great brown eyes lay straining their sight  
At the ray on her pillow of golden light.  
Only a dream, by reality broken:  
But could it be true that this was a token

### MAUDINE LARIVEN

That often befell those who strove but in vain,  
And lost their own soul, while they sought that of fame?  
"I will not believe it: this is not the end,  
To those who seek power, God willingly leads.  
I will not believe this life holds but alloy:  
'Tis radiant, 'tis buoyant, 'tis brimming with joy.  
'To do and to dare' is the law that is given—  
And you shall obey it, Maudine Lariven."

Six months had gone by. Maudine's aspiration  
Had reached the college, the first inspiration  
Long since instilled. But now through her life's joyous song  
Rang a minor key thus,—"I cannot be wrong."  
Her first heart's desire had been granted, 'tis true,  
But over her sky clouds were hiding the blue.  
She thought of her home, now no longer her home:  
For had she not chosen the world's paths to roam,  
Nor linger thus idly and dream life away?  
'Twas work she was wanting, and not idle play.  
She thought of the loved ones, whose lives she had filled  
With sunshine and gladness,—now gloomy and ill:  
And then the squire's voice, with its low measured tone,  
"Come not back, Maudine, for my heart turns to stone.  
When you pass this threshold your fortune to try,  
You no longer rules of a daughter comply.  
Now go. May God bless you wherever you roam,  
But know that this cottage is no longer home."

## MAUDINE LARIVEN

"So I went, I am gone, and now here I stand.  
I will not, I cannot, e'er break that command.  
'To do and to dare.' 'To dare' has been done.  
'To do' lives through ages, 'tis scarcely begun.  
A rule only half-lived is not lived at all.  
I will live the whole well, though bitter as gall."

Time passed with its laughter, its trials, its tears,  
Until the fair June-time had numbered two years.  
The old college halls wore a holiday look  
With festoons of flowers, not a problem or book  
Left a mar on the scene of what once had been.  
And even the thought of the past seemed a sin.  
For was it not said by the wisest of men,  
That we scorn the degrees by which we ascend?

The morrow's tide, as it spread o'er the main,  
Would carry not only the wrecks that had lain  
For ages, perchance, on its rock-bounded coast,  
To drift far away as some mariner's ghost:  
But on the great ocean of life would be borne  
Some barks yet untried, by the waves yet unworn,  
And some to be anchored in harbors of peace:  
While some would drift out where the waves never cease  
To rock the frail bark as Charybdis' mad whirl:  
And some on the grey rock of Scyllia be hurled.  
Impatient is youth, as down its small stream  
It hastens to meet all of life's deeper themes,