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### Select Poetry.

#### Esau's Blessing.

By REV. EDWARD C. JOYCE.

"Hast thou not one blessing, Oh, my father? Bless me, even as thou didst bless thy brother, and I will be content."—Genesis.

Hast thou no blessing but the one,  
The solitary boon of love?  
And shall thy other sorrowing son  
Despair's deep anguish prove?  
Nor find one boon to gladden his  
Which all his future life must thread?  
In vain will Esau's name be  
The grasp and pang of his  
The wheat and flax would leave me poor,  
If bent on earthly gain,  
I could not from the earth  
The blessing thy heart has given.  
Thy heart I know has spoken it,  
Though lips refuse to give it birth,  
See how the evening shadow's fit,  
Altho' my brother's heart is  
Oh, father! must this sun go down,  
And leave me with thy giant frown?  
He came with subtle and took  
My choicest grain from out the place,  
He knew content I could not brook,  
And yet he scorns my face:  
He is the mighty hunter now,  
And I, the deer whose antlers bow.  
I sped me from the chase to bring  
My father's savory meat in joy,  
For he is best of all my food,  
Could I but carry him to my  
And lo! what speaks his quivering tongue,  
My bright and my blessing gone,  
Thou must not die and I unheeded  
By that prophetic voice of power—  
My inmost spirit must be scared,  
If madness ruled the hour:  
And madness o'er this brain must come,  
If these dear lips of mine keep dumb.  
He bowed his stalwart form and wept,  
He shook like cedar away his storm,  
And the sweetest music of his voice,  
Came thick and fast, and in a  
And in the distance he slept,  
The broken pulse of destiny.

off, so as to give each of his victims a full view of his face, only no two of them could ever agree as to what it was like. My father was a Gloucestershire man. He stood six feet three in his stockings, and measured thirty-six inches across the chest. He could double up a half crown between his finger and thumb, and was as brave as a lion. So, many a time and oft, when any one talked of the dangers of the road, he would set his great teeth together, shake his head, and say that he should like to see the man who could rob him on the highway; and as I said before, he did see him, and it was Tom Rocket.

My father was a lawyer, and was, at the time I have mentioned, engaged in a great tithing cause that was to be tried at the Warwick Spring assizes. So, shortly before Christmas, he had to go over to look up evidence. There was no cross country coach, so he rode; and being, as I have said, a brave man, he rode alone. He was alone longer than he could help, he set out to ride home again, about half past nine that same evening. It was as beautiful a winter's night as ever you were out in. His nag was a first-rate hunter, as docile as a dog, and fit to carry even his weight over or past anything. He held a brace of excellent pistols in his holsters, and he jogged along, humming a merry tune, neither thinking nor caring for any robber under the sun. All of a sudden it struck him that the pretty barmaid of an inn just out of Warwick town, where he had stopped to have a girth that he had broken patched together, had been very busy with those self-same pistols; and suspecting that she might have been tampering with them he drew the charges and re-loaded them carefully. This done, he jogged on as before.

He had ridden about ten miles, when he came to a wooden bridge that there was in those days over Avon. Just beyond it rose a stouffish hill, at the top of which was a sudden bend in the road. Just as my father reached this turn, a masked horseman suddenly wheeled upon him, and bade him—"Stand and deliver!" It was Tom Rocket! In a second my father's pistols were out, cocked and snapped within a yard of the highwayman's breast; but, one after the other, they missed fire! "The pretty barmaid—a special favorite of Tom's—was so sharp to rely on the old dodge of drawing the bulb, or damping the charge; she thrusts a pin into each touch-hole, and broke it short off." "Any more?" Tom inquired, as coolly as you please, when my father's second pistol flashed in the pan.

"Yes!" shouted my father in a fury, "one on your knob!" And seizing the weapon just used by the muzzle, he hurled it with all his might and main at Rocket's head. Tom ducked, the pistol flew over the hedge, and my father thrown out of balance by his exertion, lost his seat, and fell heavily on the grass by the roadside. It felt more than it takes to say so, Tom dismounted, seized my father by the collar, and presenting a pistol within an inch of his face as he lay, bade him be quiet, or it would be worse for him.

"You've given me a deal of trouble, said Tom. "So just hand over your purse without any more ado, or by G-d I'll send a bullet through your skull—just there;" and laid the cold muzzle of his pistol on my father's forehead just between his eyes.

"It is bad enough to have to look down the barrel of loaded firearms upon full cock, with a highwayman's finger upon the trigger; but to have the cold muzzle pressed slowly upon your head—ugh!—it makes me creep to think of it.

My father made a virtue of necessity, and quietly gave up his purse.

"Much good may it do you," he said; "for there's only three and sixpence in it."

"Now for your pocket-book," said Tom, not hearing him.

"Pocket-book!" inquired my father, turning a little pale.

"Aye, pocket-book!" Tom repeated; "a thick black one; it is in the left hand pocket of your riding coat."

"Here it is," said my father, "you know so much about it that perhaps you can tell what its contents are worth?"

"I'll see," Tom replied, quietly taking out and unfolding half a dozen legal looking documents.

"They are law papers—not worth a cent to you or any one else," said my father.

"Then," Tom replied, "I can tear them up," and he made as though he would do so.

"Hold!" on your life!" my father shouted, struggling hard, but in vain, to rise.

"Oh! they are worth something then," said Tom, with a grin.

"It would take a deal of trouble to make them out again," my father replied sulkily—"that's all."

"How much trouble?" Tom inquired, with a meaning look.

"Well," my father answered, "I suppose I know what you are driving at. Hand me them back and let me go, and I promise to send you a hundred pounds when and where you please."

"You know very well that these papers

are worth more than a hundred," said Tom.

"A hundred and fifty then," said my father.

"Go on," said Tom.

"I tell you what it is, you scoundrel," cried my father, "I'll stake five hundred against them, if you'll lose your hold and fight me fairly for it."

Tom only chuckled.

"Why what a nifty you must take me for," he said; "why should I bother myself fighting for what I even get without?"

"You're a cur, that's what you are," my father shouted in a fury.

"Don't be cross," said Tom, "it don't become you to look red in the face. Now attend to me," he continued in an altered tone, "do you see that bridge? Well! there's a heap of stones in the centre, is there not? Very good! If you will place five hundred guineas in gold, in a bag, in those stones, at twelve o'clock at night this day week, you shall find your pocket-book and all its contents in the same place, two hours afterwards."

"How am I to know that you will keep your word?" my father inquired, a little softened by the hope of regaining, even at so heavy a price, the papers that were so valuable to him.

"I'm Tom Rocket," replied the robber, securing the pocket-book upon his person, "and what I say I mean, and what I say I stick to. Now, get up, and mind," he added as my father sprang to his feet, "my pistols don't miss fire."

"I shall live to see you hanged," my father muttered, adjusting his disordered dress.

"Shall I help you to catch your horse," Tom politely asked.

"I'll never rest till I lodge you in jail," said my father, savagely.

"Give my compliments to your wife," said Tom, mounting his horse.

"Confound your impudence," howled my father.

"Good night," said Tom, with a wave of his hand, and turning sharp round, he jumped his horse over the fence and was out of sight in a moment.

It was not quite fair of my father, I must own, but he was determined to set a trap for Tom Rocket, bated with five hundred guineas, at the bridge. He posted up to London, saw Bradshaw, a famous Bow street runner, and arranged that he and his men should come down, and help to catch Tom; but just at the last moment Bradshaw was detained upon some important government trial, and so another runner, Fraser, a no less celebrated officer, took his place.

It was settled that the runners should come by different roads, and all meet at a way side inn, about five miles from the bridge, at eight o'clock P. M., on the day my father's pocket-book was to be returned. An hour afterwards they were to join him on the road three miles further on. Their object, you see, in taking this roundabout course was to baffle Tom's spies and accomplices, and to get securely hid about the appointed place long before the appointed time.

My father was a little late at the place of meeting; but when he arrived there he could see no one about, except a loutish-looking countryman in a smock-frock, who was swinging on a gate hard by.

"Goodnight, maister," said the yokel.

"Good night to you," replied my father.

"Can ye tell me who this yer letter's for," said the yokel, producing a folded paper.

My father saw in a moment that it was his own letter to Bradshaw.

"Where did you get that?" he asked quickly.

"Ah!" replied the yokel, replacing it in his pocket, "that ud be telling. Be yer expecting anybody?"

"What's that to you?" replied my father.

"Oh 'nough," said yokel, "only a gentleman from London—"

"Ha!" cried my father; "what gentleman?"

"Will a name beginning with F: suit you?" asked the yokel.

"Fraser?" The word fell involuntarily from my father's lips.

"That's the name," replied the yokel, jumping down from his seat, and changing his tone and manner in a moment.

"Fraser, sir; and you're Mr. Sandeiger, as has been robbed of a pocket-book containing valuable papers; and we're going to catch Tom Rocket as has got it—that's our game, sir. All right, sir; and now to business."

"But where are your men?" my father asked, when Fraser had explained the reason for his disguise.

"All right again, sir," said the runner, "they will join us. We have not much time to lose, so please to lead the way."

So my father led the way, followed by Fraser; and by the time that they came in sight of the bridge, they had been joined by four London officers in different disguises, and from different directions. One appeared as a tramp, one as a pedlar, another as a gentleman's servant, leading a horse, and the fourth as a soldier. No one could have guessed that they had met before, much less that they were engaged together in pre-concerted scheme. My

father gave Fraser great credit for the dexterous way in which he had collected his forces.

The bridge upon which the money was to be placed, consisted of two arches across the river, and was joined on either side by a long sort of causeway, built upon piles over meadows, that in the winter time were generally covered with water. It so happened, that the very next morning after the robbery, a heavy rain set in, and soon the floods were out, so that there was no way of getting on the bridge but by going along the causeway, which extended a distance of a hundred yards, sloping down gradually to the river. This causeway was built of wood. At some places the timbers were covered with earth and stones, but at others the roadway had worn out and they were bare, so that any one looking up from underneath, could see who was passing overhead. Mr. Fraser's sharp eye took in the position in a moment. He got two hurdles out of a field close by, and with some rope, that he had brought for another purpose, fastened them to the piles, so that they hung like shelves between the roadway and the flood, one at each side of the bridge, and about 20 yards from it. This was his plan; two of his men were to be hidden on each hurdle, whilst he and my father, in a boat that was concealed beneath the main arch of the bridge, unson themselves, could watch the boat, and the stolen pocket-book left in exchange for it. As soon as Tom Rocket, or any of his friends, removed the bag in which the gold was placed, Fraser was to whistle, and his men were to climb from their hiding places, and secure whoever it might be. If he leaped over the railing of the causeway, and took to the water, there was the boat in which to follow and capture him.

Mr. Fraser was very particular to practice his allies in springing quickly from their places of concealment, and impressed upon them and my father the necessity of all acting together, keeping careful watch and strict silence. "And now, sir," he said to my father as a distant clock chimed a quarter of twelve, "so, come to get to our places and to bait the trap; please to hand me the bag that I may mark it, and some of the coins so as to be able to identify them at the trial." He had made up his mind you see to nail Mr. Tom Rocket just there.

My father gave him the bag, saw him write upon it, and make some scratches on about a dozen of the guineas, and then my father let himself down in the boat, in which he was immediately joined by the runner.

"It's all right," said Fraser, in a low tone.

"Do you think he will come? whispered my father.

"Certain," replied Fraser, "but hush, we must not talk, sir, times up."

For three mortal hours did my father sit in that boat, and the runners lay stretched out on the broad of their backs upon those hurdles watching for Tom Rocket to come for his money; and for three mortal hours not a soul approached the bridge, not a sound but the wash of the swollen river was heard. By the time that the clock struck three, my father, who had been nodding for the last twenty minutes, fell fast asleep as he sat covered up in his cloak, for it was a bitter cold night; but was very speedily aroused by hearing Fraser cry out that they were adrift.

Adrift they were, sure enough. The rope that held them had been chafed upon the sharp corner of a pile, (so Mr. Fraser explained,) till it broke, and way went the boat, whirling round and round in the eddies of the river, fit to make any one giddy. So strong was the stream, that they were carried a mile and a half down it, before they could get ashore. My father was for returning directly to the bridge; and so was Fraser; but, somehow or other, they lost each other in the dark, and when my father arrived there, having run nearly all the way, he found, to his great surprise, that the officers had left. He rushed to the heap of stones, and there the first thing that caught his eye was his pocket-book—the money was gone!

Lord how he did swear!

Determining to have it out with the runners for deserting their posts, he hurried on to the inn where they had met, and were to pass the night. He knocked at the door. No answer. He knocked again, louder. No answer. He was not in the very best of tempers, as you may guess; so he gave the door a heavy kick. In it flew, and a sight met his view that fairly took his breath. He stood in five chairs, hand and foot, trussed up like so many Christmas turkeys, with five guineas glaring at him owlishly, sat the real Mr. Fraser; and his four Bow street runners. Tom Rocket had managed the business at the bridge himself! How he managed to get sent of the plot, and to seize the officers altogether, just at the nick of time, my father never could find out, and no one knows yet.

Upon examining his pocket-book, my father found all his documents, and paper on which was written these words:

"By destroying these writings I could have ruined you. In doing so I should have injured your client, whom I respect. For his sake I keep my word, though you have played me false."

Tom Rocket.

Here Mr. Josh paused, and puffed for some time in silence.

"And what became of Tom?" interrogated one of the company.

"Well," replied Mr. Josh, "after having been tried three times, and getting off upon some law quibble on each occasion, he who had robbed the worth of thousands of pounds and escaped, was executed at Nottingham for stealing an old bridle!"

Indian Love.

A young Indian failed in his attentions to a young squaw. She made complaint to an old chief, who appointed a hearing, or trial. The lady laid the case before the judge, and explained the nature of the promise made to her. It consisted of sundry visits to her wigwam, "many indefinite attentions," and presents, a bunch of feathers, and several yards of red flannel. This was the charge. The faithless swain denied the "undefinable attentions" in toto. He had visited her father's wigwam, for the purpose of passing away time, when it was not convenient to hunt, and had given the feathers and flannel from friendly motives, and nothing further. During the latter part of the defence the squaw fainted. The plea was considered invalid, and the offender sentenced to give the lady "a yellow feather, a brooch that was then dangling from his nose, and a dozen fox tails." The sentence was no sooner concluded than the squaw sprang upon her feet, and clasped her hands, exclaimed with joy:

"Now mo ready to be courted again."

Printer's Ten Commandments.

1. Thou shalt love the printer—for he is the standard of the country.
2. Thou shalt subscribe for his paper—for he wisheth much to obtain the news, of which you might remain ignorant.
3. Thou shalt subscribe to his paper—for he laboureth hard to give you this news in due season.
4. If a business man, thou shalt advertise that, through the profits, he may enable thee not only to pay for thy paper, but "put money in thy purse."
5. Thou shalt not visit him regardless of his office rules—deranging his papers.
6. Thou shalt touch nothing that will give the printer trouble; that he may not hold thee guilty.
7. Thou shalt not read the manuscript in the hands of the compositor—for he will not hold thee blameless.
8. Thou shalt not see the news before it is printed—for he will give it to thee in due season.
9. Thou shalt not question him about things in the office—from it thou shalt tell nothing.
10. Thou shalt not, at any time, send abusive and intimidating epistles to the editor, nor covide him more than five times per annum.

A BEAUTIFUL EXTRACT.—Beautiful is old age, beautiful as the slow drooping of mellow autumn of a rich, glorious summer. In the old man nature has fulfilled her designs; she leads him with the fruit of a well-spent life; and surrounded by his children, she bears him softly away to the grave; to which he is followed by blessings. God forbid that we should not call it beautiful. There is another life, hard, rough and thorny, trodden with bleeding feet, and aching brow; a battle which no peace follows this side of the grave; which the grave escapes to finish before the victory is won; and strange that it should be—the highest life of man. Great along the great name of history; there is none whose life has been other than this.

A man who had been recently a major of militia, and was not overburdened with brain, concluded, on the morning of parade, to exercise a little by himself. The field selected for the purpose was his own apartment. Placing himself in a military attitude, with his sword drawn, he exclaimed:

"Attention, company! Rest, file, three paces, march!" and he tumbled down into the cellar. His wife, hearing the noise, came running in, exclaiming: "My dear, have you hurt yourself?"

"Go about your business, woman," said the hero, "what do you understand about war?"

It is a fair step toward happiness and virtue to delight in the company and conversation of good men, and when these can't be had, it is better to have no company at all.

Kindnesses are stowed away in the heart as roses leave in a drawer, to sweeten every object around them.

Never have a cigar in your mouth while conversing with a lady, nor use it in a carriage or room, where a lady is sitting.

### Select Story.

#### TOM ROCKET, THE ENGLISH HIGHWAYMAN.

Tom Rocket was a highwayman. No one ever christened him Tom, and his father's name was not Rocket. When he was tried for his life at Warwick assizes, he was arraigned as Charles Jackson, and they were particular about names then. If you indicated a man as Jim, and his true name was Jos, he got off; and when the law was altered so that they could set such errors right at the trial—people, leastwise were being pulled up, root and branch. But that's neither here nor there. I cannot tell you how it was that he came to be known as Tom Rocket, and if I could, it would not have anything to do with my story. For six years he was the most famous thief in the Midland counties and for six years no one knew what he was like. He was a lazy fellow, was Tom; he never came out except when there was a good prize to be picked up, and he had his scouts and his spies all over the place to give him information about booty, and what people said, he was "on the road" at half a dozen different places at once, every day of his life; for you see when any one was robbed of his property, or found it convenient so to account for it, why he laid it upon Tom Rocket as a sort of excuse for giving it up easily, because, you see, no one thought of arresting Tom. So it was, that all sorts of conflicting descriptions of his person got abroad. One said that he was an awfully tall man and had a voice like thunder; another, that he was a mild little man, with black eyes and light hair. He was a fiery fat man, with blue eyes and black hair with some; he had a jolly red face—he was as pale as death—his nose was Roman one day, Grecian or snob the next. His dress was all the colors of the rainbow, and as for his horse, that was of every shade and breed, that was ever heard of, and a good many more beside that have yet to be found. He wore a black half-mask, but some how or other it was always obliging enough to slip

From his den in the darkened North he comes,  
With thousand shadowy forms,  
To take a king's share in the harvest of death,  
And revel in withering storms.  
Oh, agrim old tyrant and grey is he,  
With the ashes of your eye gone,  
His garb is a haggard wrapping him round,  
And the sun is the jewel with which it is bound,  
Till clouds, to unrobe him, appear.  
He has gazed the long-armed ghosts of the wood,  
That watch o'er the graves of the flowers;  
And he mockingly decks them with crystals of light,  
And greets their stiff limbs in a garment of white,  
Brought out from the sands of his hour.  
He breathes on the river, and bids it lie  
Covered in a living death;  
He rakes the man in a steam-bearing cloud,  
He covers the earth with an ice-throated shroud,  
And fastens it on with a breath.  
The Old Year dies in his deadly grip,  
And aside from the present he cast;  
New Year springs from its icy grave,  
And strong in its youth the foe to brave,  
Shall live when the Winter is past.

WINTER.  
From his den in the darkened North he comes,  
With thousand shadowy forms,  
To take a king's share in the harvest of death,  
And revel in withering storms.  
Oh, agrim old tyrant and grey is he,  
With the ashes of your eye gone,  
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#### TOM ROCKET, THE ENGLISH HIGHWAYMAN.

Tom Rocket was a highwayman. No one ever christened him Tom, and his father's name was not Rocket. When he was tried for his life at Warwick assizes, he was arraigned as Charles Jackson, and they were particular about names then. If you indicated a man as Jim, and his true name was Jos, he got off; and when the law was altered so that they could set such errors right at the trial—people, leastwise were being pulled up, root and branch. But that's neither here nor there. I cannot tell you how it was that he came to be known as Tom Rocket, and if I could, it would not have anything to do with my story. For six years he was the most famous thief in the Midland counties and for six years no one knew what he was like. He was a lazy fellow, was Tom; he never came out except when there was a good prize to be picked up, and he had his scouts and his spies all over the place to give him information about booty, and what people said, he was "on the road" at half a dozen different places at once, every day of his life; for you see when any one was robbed of his property, or found it convenient so to account for it, why he laid it upon Tom Rocket as a sort of excuse for giving it up easily, because, you see, no one thought of arresting Tom. So it was, that all sorts of conflicting descriptions of his person got abroad. One said that he was an awfully tall man and had a voice like thunder; another, that he was a mild little man, with black eyes and light hair. He was a fiery fat man, with blue eyes and black hair with some; he had a jolly red face—he was as pale as death—his nose was Roman one day, Grecian or snob the next. His dress was all the colors of the rainbow, and as for his horse, that was of every shade and breed, that was ever heard of, and a good many more beside that have yet to be found. He wore a black half-mask, but some how or other it was always obliging enough to slip

From his den in the darkened North he comes,  
With thousand shadowy forms,  
To take a king's share in the harvest of death,  
And revel in withering storms.  
Oh, agrim old tyrant and grey is he,  
With the ashes of your eye gone,  
His garb is a haggard wrapping him round,  
And the sun is the jewel with which it is bound,  
Till clouds, to unrobe him, appear.  
He has gazed the long-armed ghosts of the wood,  
That watch o'er the graves of the flowers;  
And he mockingly decks them with crystals of light,  
And greets their stiff limbs in a garment of white,  
Brought out from the sands of his hour.  
He breathes on the river, and bids it lie  
Covered in a living death;  
He rakes the man in a steam-bearing cloud,  
He covers the earth with an ice-throated shroud,  
And fastens it on with a breath.  
The Old Year dies in his deadly grip,  
And aside from the present he cast;  
New Year springs from its icy grave,  
And strong in its youth the foe to brave,  
Shall live when the Winter is past.

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