

THE COLUMBIAN.

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BLOOMSBURG, PA., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1880.

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Poetical.

AN AMERICAN SKETCH.

By KELLIE G. GUNN. His heart is all of English oak, His brow all of English kersey.

HELEN OF TYRE.

By HENRY W. LONGFELLOW. What phantom is this that appears Through the purple mist of the years.

Select Story.

MARK DILLON'S BOLD GAME.

'I am getting into terribly bad habits, Dora. Breakfast at half-past nine!

'I hope that you're going to remain at home this morning,' Dora said, in a soft, coaxing tone.

'You know, Austin, that you have not painted an atom of canvas this week?

'Yes, my love, the young artist interrupted, I painted every inch of it.

'You are perfectly right, Mrs. Austin— or Mrs. Dillon. Which it is to be by the way?

'His tones were definitely supercilious; his eyes, cruel eyes were fixed upon the agonized woman.

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ENGAGEMENTS.

Ought engagements to be long or short? It has often been said that nothing helps so much a steady young man as the being engaged to the girl whom he loves and for whom he vows to prepare a suitable home.

'Oh, heaven! is it you, Mark Dillon? I thought you dead—'

'He had drawn her to his breast, with a wild, impulsive movement. At the same instant, the door of the studio was suddenly unrolled, and a woman's voice cried out in clear, ringing tones: 'Mark Dillon lies, Mr. Austin, when he dares to call himself your husband!'

'The sound of her fall was quickly followed by that of an opening door at the further end of the room, as Mr. Austin's model, wearing a startled look on her beautiful face, the stranger's back was turned to her as he bent over the prostrate figure of Dora.

'The angry flash of his dark eyes finished the sentence more powerfully than words could have done.

'Trembling in every limb, the woman answered pleadingly: 'I had no thought of following you, Mark. I never imagined that you knew this lady. I—'

'Leave the house instantly, Ellen! Don't hesitate a moment, but go at once!'

'The woman shuddered and turned toward the door leading into the studio.

'I may explain this matter to you some other time,' the man continued, 'but remember, I warn you against remaining in this house a moment longer than you can help.'

'When the studio-door had closed behind the woman's retreating steps, Mark Dillon once more bent over the white face of Dora Austin. A faint shiver convulsed her frame at this moment, and while his gaze was eagerly fastened upon her countenance, the siren lashed slowly lifted herself from her eyes.

'Then it was no dream,' she murmured, 'horribly rising from her fallen posture, assisted by the man she addressed. 'You have come,' she presently continued, 'to reveal all to— to Melville Austin.'

'She sank weakly upon an arm chair now, with a weary, gasping sigh.

'I haven't come to do anything of the sort Dora Dillon,' the man said, with a kind of sullen emphasis in his gruff tones. 'I don't wish to claim you as my wife. You believed me dead, three years ago, and married Melville Austin; there's nothing particularly culpable about your conduct as far as I can discern. I shall be the last one to depend upon my dear Mrs. Austin, to reveal anything disagreeable concerning your antecedents.'

'And why will you reveal nothing? Let there be no dispute between us, Mark Dillon. I know your brutal nature thoroughly. You came here this morning to sell your silence. Is it not so?'

'You are perfectly right, Mrs. Austin— or Mrs. Dillon. Which it is to be by the way?'

'His tones were definitely supercilious; his eyes, cruel eyes were fixed upon the agonized woman with something of a serpent's pitiless gaze when the prey is within easy distance, and possession has become a certainty.

'But Mark Dillon started back with amazement, as Dora answered him, calmly, coolly, and decidedly, in the following words: 'I shall not devote the man to whom I owe all the happiness I have ever enjoyed in this world—the man whom I love, honor and reverence as only a nature like Melville Austin's is worthy of being regarded. When I married him, Mark Dillon, I acted upon my firm conviction of your death. Now, I know myself to have been in error, and a single course remains to me. The instant that Melville Austin returns home, I shall inform him of the truth.'

'Are you mad, Dora Dillon?' he exclaimed, every trace of his supercilious manner gone, and nothing but a sort of furious surprise remaining. 'Are you mad, to throw away the position you have won?—to make a child of me by a hasty and unwise step?'

'Enough of this, Mark Dillon,' she interrupted, laughingly. 'Your game was a bold one, but it proved a failure. Ah, my husband!'

'Melville Austin had suddenly entered the apartment. Glancing at the ashen-pale countenance of Dora, a look of amazement overspread his own. Then turning towards the stranger, who stood beside the chair in which she was seated, Mr. Austin said, 'It strikes me that I heard your voice raised in a disrespectful loud tone, as I stood in the hall a moment ago. Were you addressing the lady, sir? Dora, who is this person?'

'A slight tremor shook Dora Austin's frame and her glaucous frame quivered for an instant. She had risen now, and was addressing Melville, who listened silently until she had ceased speaking, stupefied, doubtless, by the dreadful import of what she uttered.

'That man, Melville, is my husband. Five years ago, before you and I had ever met, poverty had reduced my mother and myself to the last stages of want. On my mother's death bed, and while I was still almost a child in years, Mark Dillon asked me to become his wife. We were married, and I soon discovered that my wretched, friendless position had been exchanged for one of still greater misery. I had become united to a man from whose vile, wicked life my whole nature turned in abhorrence. One evening, in a fit of drunken fury, he struck me. That night I fled from his house. During the year that followed, I succeeded in supporting myself comfortably on the proceeds of needlework. Two months before chance had made me acquainted with you, Melville, I had learned accidentally of my husband's death in France. You know what followed. Today I learn, for the first time since our marriage, that Mark Dillon lives.'

'You may go, my good fellow,' the man said. 'I have particular business with Mrs. Austin.'

'Yes—James you may go!'

'The words were passed forth somehow from Dora's white lips. If the servant observed the agitation which had suddenly overpowered his mistress, he was too well trained to manifest the least surprise, and quietly withdrew from the room, closing the door after him.

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FACTS VS. THEORY.

In regard to the method of coloring butter, the theory is that when cows are well fed and cared for will make yellow butter; the fact is that not one in ten will, except in flush pasture.

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ETIQUETTE OF LETTER-WRITING.

As a rule every letter, unless insulting in its character, requires an answer. To neglect to answer a letter when written to, is as uncivil as to neglect a reply when spoken to.

In the reply acknowledge first the receipt of the letter, mentioning the date and afterwards consider all the points requiring attention.

If