DEATH IN LIFE.

So fair, so rare, and yet so soon to die!
Love's cup untasted, brimming full and high,
Life's music silenced all so suddenly.

White statue, with the hair of living gold,
Death is the same grand sculptor as of old!
His touch makes marble—passionless and cold.

The eyes he closes ope not night nor day—
The ears he seals hear naught that earth can say—
The lips he kisses never shall betray!

O prattler of the open heart and brow,
Sphinx-like, inscrutable thou liest now—
Doomed evermore to keep a silence-vow!
—M. Heddemick Browne, in Chambers' Journal.

By CHAUNCY C. HOTCHKISS

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE HINT OF THE EARTHQUAKE.

The crash of thunder following the flash for a time made words impossible; and action was equally out of the question, for in the midst of the bellowing, and while I was casting searching glances about the room for some means of defense, he raised the weapon and leveled it at me.

I could fathom no motive for his thus attacking me, save the heat in his rum-maddened brain, and, were he impelled by drink, my position was doubly critical. Had there been a ghost of a chance to act in the aggressive, in this desperate moment I should have availed myself of it; but not even that really formidable weapon and guard, a chair, was nearer than the table, and to have made a move toward it I felt meant certain destruction. A sudden attack on him was out of my power, for betwixt us intervened the broad table itself, which made it impossible to avail myself of the tactics I had used with Lounsbury. There was naught for me to do but stand as I was and await the terrible issue.

However, as he remained silent, I managed to find my voice, and, as the thunder rolled in the distance, I shouted:

"Capt. Scammell, are you so demented or so cowardly and so lost to honor that you will murder the man you challenged to fight in the field?"

Without a swerve of the arm, he answered sternly:

"Sit down!"

Even thus beset, it irked me to obey him like a schoolboy, but I realized that, armed, under the existing circumstances he was far stronger than I with all my sinews. Wisely, then, I swallowed my ire, and, approaching the table, seated myself with the hope that he would come within reach.

He was not slow in following, for he stepped forward and carefully slid into the chair opposite, though not for a second uncovering me with the muzzle of his pistol, or, for that matter, taking his eye from mine.

And here we sat while flash and crash followed each other in quick succession. My brain worked rapidly enough, but as the seconds sped no way could I find to rid me of the shining ring of steel confronting me or turn for a moment the equally brilliant glint of his eye, each of which acquired clearness with the fitful lighting of the room.

The table was too broad for an onslaught, and now that we were closer, I could see the nerves of the man were at full tension, and that on the slightest hostile move on my part he would pull the trigger.

I hoped lightning would strike the house and put an end to the situation, which at last began to have its effect on me; and I take it that no man can long stand the scowl of a loaded barrel backed by a determined yet silent enemy without undergoing more or less strain.

I was even wishing that the heavens would let loose a bolt and finish the matter, or that the man opposite would open his lips and speak, despite the roar, when I felt the floor beneath me tremble, as though the house was shaken by a mighty power. It passed in the instant, and as it did so the thunder

"Oh, you shorn Samson!"

faded away for the moment, and Scammell, lowering his hand, let it rest on the edge of the table, whence the pistol held me full in the chest. Then he spoke, and perhaps because the excitement indoors and out had partly sobered him, his words came clearly:

"I have here your d——d message in my hand, but, as you may well guess, it is forestalled. There will be no fight between us to-morrow morning."

"Because you deem it safer to murder me now?" I returned calmly. "Give me but—"

"Shut your mouth!" he interrupted, letting go his temper. "Do you think I am here to bandy words with a rebel? Capt. Donald Thorndye, alias Lounsbury, you are close on to the end of your rope, and you'll find that end has a noose in it, you cursed spy! What!" he continued, rising in his increasing rage, and immediately reseating himself, while his voice grew louder, "do you think I am a fool, or so blind that I may not see through a riddle? I have found you out, hide and hair—Thorndyke, of Martha's Vineyard—smuggler—rebel—spy! Had you escaped me this day, and been off on Clinton's business, which doubtless lies there" (pointing to my papers, which lay on the table), "I would have hunted you down had it cost me my commission. Escape me? No, by the gods! From the beginning I fancied you the fraud you are, and at the Bull's Head, by your words and fine airs, you made me sure of it. You slipped your role. You'll find your henhawk has sharp eyes, and, giant though you be, you will see that a seamew is nothing in his grip. Nay, I have not come to shoot you down as you deserve, but I know your infernal tricks, and mean to hold you where you belong. I take it 'twill afford me more pleasure to see you dance at a rope's end than dirty my hands with your blood, save you make it urgent. Let me clinch the matter now, and then make you ready to march. Below stairs at this moment is Lounsbury in the flesh, and with him a file of men to take you off. This bit of play was for my own pleasure, and, having had it, I'll be your valet and stay by your heels until you are safely delivered to Cunningham. Now God rest your miserable soul! Have you aught to say before I give the word to the rest?"

To state that I was unaffected by these words, which were poured forth in a torrent as though my tormentor feared interruption, would be false. I saw my plans for the future, my hope for life itself, swept away together, and nothing but a blank, broken only by a vision of the gallows, danced before my eyes.

To say that he had the satisfaction of seeing me visibly quail would be equally false, for, though my heart beat thickly enough, I sat unmoved and looked at him as though in a dream. I even essayed to speak, but words would not come, for my throat was clinched by invisible bands.

"Are you crushed at last?" he exclaimed, with a grim smile, though without shifting his eye or aim. "Oh, you shorn Samson! I am well paid for your cursed insults."

He was still speaking when again the heavy shake came to the flooring. But now it did not pass into a gentle tremor and fade away; instead, it grew stronger and stronger until every rafter took up the motion and the whole house trembled as though with an ague. Greater grew the shaking until the building rocked, the bed slid away from the wall, the table shifted, the glass and bottle on it rang togther, and the pitcher danced so violently that the water within it splashed from its top. A square of plaster from the ceiling fell to the floor with a crash, filling the room with dust; but through all Scammell never winced, showing wonderment, nor bore a less threatening attitude.

In the course of the seconds through which this endured he held me as he probably would have done had the roof fallen about our ears, so determined was he to take me. I knew the nature of the turmoil at once, for when in the Indies with my father I had experienced it. It was not caused by the earth shaking from the rolling of heavy thunder, for just then the voice of the storm was confined to the roar of a terrific downpour of rain. It was an earthquake—a rare phenomenon in this latitude, and its rarity, its severity, and its results before my eyes, trifling as were these, woke me from my trance and again gave full play to my wits.

Fascinated and partly stunned as I had been by the fiendish face of my enemy and the full significance of the evil fortune into which I had suddenly fallen, like him, I sat through the commotion. Every unimportant detail about him, from the broken pearl button on his shirt front down to the grains of powder in the pistol pan and the fine edge of the flint in the lock, found a force of attraction to the eye only known to those who fall into sudden hopelessness or deep depression.

But with the dancing of the tableware a quick idea shot through my brain, and showed me a last desperate chance to extricate myself from the coil about me. Natural phenomenon in the shape of a breeze had saved me from the knife of the negro, and now 'twas an earthquake that might open a way for my deliverance by splashing water from a pitcher.

Straining my nerves to conceal the new hope that had sprung to life, I began to act. Never had I felt my muscles knit firmer or been less in need of stimulant than when, sinking back as if at last overcome by the combined shock of his words and the convulsion of nature, which had now passed, I said slowly and as though dazed:

"I am but a prisoner of war, sir. I was forced for my own safety to come to New York. I am no—spy—I will go—but—you—let me drink. I feel lax and—dizzy."

"You have none of the Indian in you, you pale-livered sneak!" he answered. "Drink, then, and gather your spunk and legs for action. Beat me with the flat of your sword! 'Fore God! But wait till I can shift my eye from you! Drink, and then move before we have another quake, and the walls about us—'twill be your last dram."

With apparent effort I raised myself, reached for the bottle, and poured out a stiff measure of liquor, which I drank off; then taking the pitcher, I made as though to fill the glass, but as I tipped it, with a sudden movement I whirled full half a gallon of water over the pistol, drenching the priming and making the weapon useless. With this action I sprang to my feet.

Scammell was quick, but not quick enough. The water had but reached the powder when I heard the snap of the descending hammer, and saw his first motion to gain his legs; but, following up the drowning of the fire-pan, I lifted the heavy table and overturned it on him, pushing him backward, where to the floor went man, furniture, and crockery with a terrific crash.

At that moment there came a vivid flash of lightning, and hard upon it an appalling peal of thunder. Though almost blinded and deafened by the bolt, I sprang round the overturned table, and seizing the first thing coming to hand, which proved to be the water jug still unbroken, I grasped the struggling tory by the throat and with all my force brought down the heavy earthenware on his uncovered head.

The pitcher flew to fragments, leaving but the handle in my grasp, while Scammell became limp and collapsed.

This action took place during the interval at which the thunder was the loudest, and was probably the reason that caused the noise of the fall of the table to be unnoticed by those below. But, as though it had been insufficient, another violent convulsion followed, which came and went with the suddenness of the explosion of a park of artillery.

I had but gotten to a standing position when a concussion rocked the house to its foundation. It sprang not from the earth below this time, but from the air above, the vibrations of which dashed the hanging glass from the wall and caused the window panes to fly in pieces into the room. It was not of the nature of an earthquake, still less like thunder near or afar; much it resembled the blowing up of a magazine, though not until afterward did I come to know this as the solution of the matter. The flash that had lighted my attack on Scammell had struck a powder ship just from England as she lay at anchor off Wall street, and no vestige of it or those aboard was ever discovered. [This combination of intense heat, violent storm, earthquake, and explosion actually occurred in New York city, Sunday, August 8, 1778.]

The vicious nature of the shock was unlike the gradual coming and going of the earthquake, and that it had occasioned more alarm I soon knew by the shouts that came from beneath my window. Rushing to it, through the shattered panes I beheld men running from the opposite houses, while in the yard below was the squad of soldiers, which had pressed from the tavern in a panic when it seemed that the building would fall.

My safety still demanded immediate action, for should curiosity or distrust impel the guard to come upstairs, I would be undone. That move would drive me to bay, and either oblige me to finally surrender or die like a rat in a hole.

But I had determined a course of procedure by the time I had finished getting into my clothing. Hastily setting the table upright, I stooped over the body of Scammell. I expected to find him dead, and was surprised to discover that he was still of this world, the thickness of his curly hair and a possible crack in the jug having saved him from a crushed skull. He was completely stunned, however, and with little ado I dragged him into the closet and shut the door.

My sole chance of escape now lay in getting to Clinton and procuring a pass, which might be used ere a hue and cry was raised after me, and I fancied the hour was not far from that appointed for the meeting. It was possible that Clinton had been informed of the falsity of my name, though I argued if that had been then Scammell would never have approached me in the manner he had done. At all events, the risk must be taken.

At first sight there seemed no means of leaving the house save by the stairs or a drop of twenty feet or more from my side window; but, upon investigation, I discovered a pent roof beneath the windows of a room near the end of the hall, and upon going into the chamber I saw the apartment was probably the quarters occupied by my late assailant. Upon the bed lay a military hat, coat, and saber, while from a hook hung a long cloak used by cavalry officers.

Appropriating the latter, I stepped from the window to the roof, creeping to the eaves which came to within ten feet of the ground, and from there dropped.

So far I had been unobserved, and it took me not many moments to get into the street

"A woman is a better judge of a man than one of his own sex."

and below the tavern, working from there a roundabout course through the east side of the town or until I dared to come out on the Broadway.

I had little fear of immediate pursuit, as none save Belden had an inkling of my mission to Clinton; and this, with the prevailing excitement due to the explosion and everywhere manifest, placed me out of danger for the time.

With the cloak about me, both as a disguise and a protection from the rain which was still falling, though rapidly diminishing, I strode down to headquarters, and there boldly sent in the name of "Captain Lounsbury" to the general in chief. It relieved me greatly to note no signs of an unusual stir about the place, nor did the guard at the door show more than a passing interest in me as he turned me over to the flunky within the hall.

Being ushered into the same great saloon I had known the day before, I waited with natural impatience for recognition. I was not far from my appointed time, for the clock on the mantel showed it was but quarter of three, nor had I cooled my heels for long before a lady entered. I caught but a glimpse of her, seeing little more than that she was richly dressed, but marked her apparent familiarity with the place by the way she immediately swept from the room without giving an opportunity for the announcement of her name.

However, I was struck by the deference of the uniformed attendant as he backed away from her, and her ladyship had not been gone above five minutes when he returned. With a glance askant at my costume, he requested me to follow him. We traversed the length of the hall to an apartment at its end, where, throwing wide the door, he loudly announced "Captain Lounsbury!" and retired, while I entered to find myself in the presence of the lady who had left the saloon but a few minutes before.

CHAPTER IX.

SIR HENRY CLINTON.

Conceiving that a blunder had been committed, and that I was unwittingly an intruder in a private room, I was about to make an apology for my presence when the lady half rose from the partly reclining position she had assumed and with a gentle wave of her hand said:

"You are Capt. Lounsbury? Come nearer, please. Sit here against the light, that I may have a look at you!" at the same time indicating a chair near the great window which was swung open and led to a small balcony without.

Her voice was sweet, but even in these few words I noticed the affectation of inflection so common with ladies of fashion, and her original position, which she immediately regained after thus addressing me, was a pose pure and simple, doubtless taken for the purpose of exposing her fine arm and the graceful curves of her small though equally fine figure.

"Madam," I replied, advancing a pace or two, "I have not the honor of knowing you as well as you seem to know me. By what name—"

"Mrs. Florence Badely," she interrupted, with a smile which discovered her small, white teeth, and accentuated the rather infantile prettiness of her face. "I have taken the liberty of asking to see you ere you met Sir Henry. A woman is a better judge of a man than one of his own sex."

"And in the present case to what end, madam?" I asked, bowing and taking the chair to which she had motioned me.

For an answer she slowly raised a pair of double-bowed gold eyeglasses, deliberately and silently scanning me from head to foot.

"Well!" she broke forth irrelevantly. "I protest, Capt. Lounsbury! You are almost a gentleman! Were your face but less red and your figure less gigantic, in a proper costume you would not be amiss. Your leg is none too delicate, but you have fine teeth and eyes, and your hair also is excellent. I am quite provoked! Sir Henry has deceived me, though it is now perhaps just as well that you are not ill-favored. Are you so hard-hearted, Capt. Lounsbury? You scarce look a kidnaper!"

Her reference to kidnaping brought me sharply back to the role of Lounsbury, whose papers had shown kidnaping to have been one of his accomplishments. Under the sharp eye of this lady, whom I now knew to be Clinton's reported light-o'-love, it would not do for me to make a slip. That in some manner she had to do with my coming secret instructions I instantly surmised, but the conjecture on my part could clear the mystery of the nature of this interest. Deeming it policy to refrain from discussing the matter, I simply said:

"Madam, my leg is not exactly that of a dancing master, nor has my figure the grace of a courtier, but they are the gifts of God, and have seen service in this broil against the king. As for the small compliments, I am your debtor."

"Now, really, Capt. Lounsbury, you have quite a neat gift at retort also." But she got no further, as at that instant a door concealed by heavy hangings was suddenly thrown open, letting in a burst of noisy laughter from what might have been a dozen men, the sound of jollity being mingled with the clinking of glasses and clattering of coin. The door then shut, and was evidently securely fastened, as I heard the turn of a key and the shooting of a bolt, the curtains were pushed aside, and there entered a man, who by his uniform alone I knew to be the commander in chief of the British forces in America.

Sir Henry gave me but a passing glance as I rose to my feet. He stepped forward, and taking the hand of the lady, who barely shifted her position to greet him, bowed low over it, repeatedly kissing the finger tips.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

GENERAL LEE TOOK THEM.

The Children Went to the Circus and They Had a Good Excuse for Their Mother.

Gen. Robert E. Lee, the famous confederate commander, was as kind-hearted and simple-mannered as he was brave and able. While president of Washington and Lee university, Virginia, in the later years of his life, he was greatly beloved by the children, whom he loved in return. It was his delight to give the little ones pleasure. Prof. Nelson's two little girls were great favorites. The general would turn and ride with them when they met, encourage them to talk of their dolls and playthings and then escort them home with as much gallantry as if they were young ladies. He would alight and helping them down from the gentle old horse they both rode he would part with a kiss from each. Once the strict Presbyterian rule of the Nelson household was rudely shocked by the general. A circus was coming to town, and as Prof. and Mrs. Nelson left for a visit of several days they charged the children on no account to go. So the two little girls hung over the fence, listened to the music and envied the children that passed on their way to that tented paradise, but they never once hoped to go. Presently a larger crowd of children than ever came along, and in their midst was Gen. Lee, keenly enjoying the happiness of his little proteges. The little Nelson girls joined the party without a word when he asked them to come along with him. Soon they were all in the tent, and when the performance began all were given reserved seats by the owner of the circus. "Mother, we went to the circus," was the greeting of the children on their parents' return. "Why, children, didn't I tell you you must not go?" said their mother. "But Gen. Lee took us." "Oh, well," said their mother, "if Gen. Lee took you that's all right." After that going to the circus was a legitimate amusement for the children.—Troy Times.

Presence of Mind.

The presence of mind of an American soldier in moments of danger is one of his chief characteristics. A brother of Father de Smet, the noted Jesuit missionary, who labored among the Indians of the west about a quarter of a century ago, was with his regiment on some western campaign. One day he wandered too far from the command, and suddenly found himself surrounded by a band of hostile Indians. He was seized and was just about to be tomahawked, when he remembered hearing his brother say one day that the Indians had a great devotion for the sign of the cross, the symbol of the Catholic faith. Accordingly he raised his right hand to his forehead and in distinct tones repeated the words: "In the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Ghost." As De Smet had expected the effect was magical and in less than five minutes he was a free man.—St. Louis Republic.

Matrimonial Item.

Said his nephew to Mr. Cynical Old batch:

"So, uncle, you don't believe in marrying for love?"

"No."

"Then I suppose you are in favor of marrying for money?"

"No."

"Well, what kind of marriage is the best, in your opinion?"

"The one that does not come off at all."—Tammany Times.

A Broken Heart.

Mr. Hardhead—And so the court has decided in your favor?

Miss Levelhead—Yes, I have been awarded $50,000 damages for a broken heart in my breach of promise suit against old Mr. Saphead, and the money has been paid over. Now, my love, we can get married as soon as we please.—Harlem Life.

Common Symptoms.

"I think I am in love with that girl, when she comes around I get three new diseases."

"What are they?"

"Palpitation of the heart, ossification of the head and paralysis of the tongue."—Chicago Record.

PEACE OFFERINGS.

They Preceded Him and as His Wife Predicted He Was Home with His Purchases.

She received a large box full of American beauty roses by messenger from her husband along toward four o'clock the other afternoon.

"James is absorbing Martigny cocktails again," she mused shrewdly.

Half an hour later another messenger brought her five pounds of expensive candy from her husband.

"James has ordered that $80 overcoat he was talking about, but said he couldn't afford," she mused again.

Half an hour later a wagon drew up, with a florist's name painted on the sides thereof, and two handsome, full-grown palms were delivered at her door marked as coming from her husband.

"Olive branches preceding him," she mused some more. "He'll be home by dark."

He was home by dark. He had been absorbing Martignys. He had ordered the $80 overcoat. The prescience of the modern married woman is sufficiently awe-inspiring to persuade any man to raise his bonnet thereto.—Washington Post.

Give the Children a Drink

called Grain-O. It is a delicious, appetizing, nourishing food drink to take the place of coffee. Sold by all grocers and liked by all who have used it, because when properly prepared it tastes like the finest coffee but is free from all its injurious properties. Grain-O aids digestion and strengthens the nerves. It is not a stimulant but a health builder, and children, as well as adults, can drink it with great benefit. Costs about ¼ as much as coffee. 15 and 25c.

Matter of Length.

"How long should mourning gowns be worn by a widow of 22?" was the question that came sobbing through the mails. Now it chanced to be the sporting editor's day off, and the religious editor, therefore, was attending to the Side Talks with Young Persons. "There is no hard and fast rule," wrote the religious editor, confidently, "but they ought to come down to the boot tops, at least." This incident illustrates the occasional awkwardness of a newspaper standing as a bulwark of morals to the exclusion of everything else.—Detroit Journal.

For Whooping Cough, Piso's Cure is a successful remedy.—M. P. Dieter, 67 Throop Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y., Nov. 14, '94.

It is a matter of wonder that nobody ever excused his tardiness by claiming that the sun rose too late.—Ledger Monthly.

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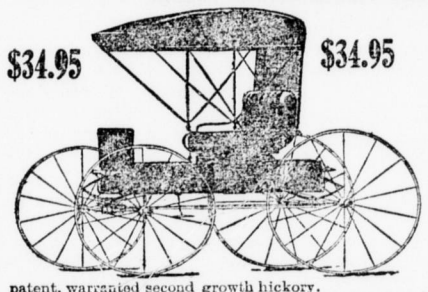
$34.95  $34.95

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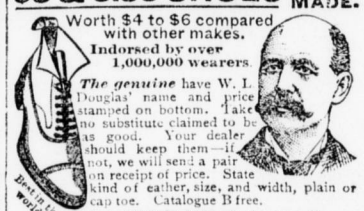

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