

had come over his face when, two or three times, she had spoken of the pine grove. And then this sudden wealth that had come to him—by speculation, he said. Poor Uncle John! coming home with his heart full of joyful anticipations. And how near she had come to being a murderer's wife! Now the task of bringing the murderer to justice devolved upon her, and how terrible the task! How little proof she had! Would any body believe that what she had heard was anything more than the raving of an insane woman?

The wall paper had started off in one place, and Syl moved the bed away from it, taking care to make no noise, and then pulled it up; there was a faint dark stain on the plastered wall. She tore the paper off the whole length of the roll, and under it, spattered over the wall, almost to the ceiling were stains of blood. Some one had evidently tried to wash them out, and finding that vain had papered over them. A faintness and trembling seized Syl when she saw them, and a sudden terror. To get away from that house, never to see Derrick nor his aunt again was all she cared for. She dressed herself hastily, determining to get away before they were awake. When he saw the torn paper, would not Derrick know why she had gone? A sudden thought struck her. She would show him that she knew, and then, if it were true, he would never come near her again.

Afterwards Syl thought that her brain must have been turned by that dreadful night's experience, or she should never have done so wild a thing, never have had courage enough to do it, after what she had heard and saw. But then she did not stop to think after the idea came to her. She took a piece of charcoal from the smouldering fire, and drew on the plastering from which she had torn the paper beside those dark-red stains, a sketch—the edge of the pine grove, and the old well. She could see them in the window, and she drew them, even with her rough materials, with almost startling accuracy. The work had a strange fascination for her; she put her whole soul into it, exulting in her ability as she had never done before. Was not her talent of some use to her, in spite of Aunt Jane's sneers? Amidst the heap of stones around the well she drew a skull, grinning and ghastly. Before she had put the finishing touches to her picture she heard footsteps overhead. She stole out, unbarred the great front door softly, and ran swiftly, breathlessly, without a backward glance toward home.

The sun was shining brightly; there were no trace of the storm save in the drenched fields and muddy roads. Syl had put on her ball attire of the night before, and it was soon wet and draggled, but she flew on never heeding it, fancying continually, in her terror, that she heard footsteps following her, Derrick Hurst's voice calling her.

A mile away from home her path crossed the railroad track; it ran over a steep ascent that was hard to climb, and Syl was forced to pause to take breath. It was well that she did so, for just then a puff of smoke through the trees told her that a train of cars was coming around the curve—the morning train that was due at Densboro, at seven o'clock. Her eyes wandered carelessly along the track as she waited, till suddenly they fell upon something that made her spring forward with a cry of alarm. Only a few rods from where she stood the track had been torn up two or three yards, and thrown down over the embankment! Her frantic cries were unheard; the train came rushing along at lightning speed. Syl shut her eyes. There came a terrible crash, and then cries of terror and pain rang in her ears. All around her crushed and mangled forms were lying; one had fallen almost at her feet. She sank down beside it, with a cry that rang above all the others, when her eyes fell on the upturned face. For it was Stephen Lawrence's face!

"You here, Syl? you come down to meet me?" he murmured, with a gleam of gladness in his eyes. "My darling! I was sure you must be ill or dead, from your long silence! I would not believe that you were false to me. I could not endure the suspense any longer, and so I came down. Why didn't you write?"

"I haven't heard from you for months, Stephen; only two or three times since you went away! I thought it was you who was false," said Syl. And then there was no more time for explanations, and Stephen had no more strength to speak. Help had come from the village, and they were caring for the sufferers, as speedily as possible. But it seemed ages to Syl before Stephen was safely at her own home.

He was badly hurt, but he would live, was the doctor's verdict, and Syl's joy and thankfulness knew no bounds when she thought, shudderingly, of what might have been, of four or five houses in Densboro' that had been made desolate by the railroad accident. But, except by the sufferers, that was soon almost forgotten in a new sensation.

Derrick Hurst and his Aunt Joanna had disappeared, leaving not the slightest clue to their whereabouts, and old Mrs. Hurst had wandered into the village, telling to everybody she met the story she told to Syl. At first the people treated the story as insane folly, but the

disappearance of Derrick and his aunt put a new face upon the matter. The house was examined, and the stairs and the strange picture found upon the wall, and then Syl told of her night's stay there, and it became evident that the picture had driven Derrick Hurst away. When the well was searched and a skeleton found in it, there was no more doubt. Large rewards were offered for his apprehension, but all in vain, and at last his property was all made over to Aunt Jane, to whom there was no doubt that it rightfully belonged.

Years afterward a story found its way to Densboro' that Derrick Hurst had died in California, and, dying, had confessed his crime, and also that he had caused the railroad accident, learning that Stephen Lawrence was on the train, through his letters to Syl, which he had intercepted.

But the news mattered little to anybody, now, except that perhaps Syl Lawrence may have felt a little relief at knowing he was no longer in the world. Her husband is growing famous as an artist, but since that night Syl can never bear to touch a pencil, and Aunt Jane persists in saying that "the only good Syl's talent ever did was to help a murderer to get rid of his just deserts;" but Syl answers that but for that she might never have come in possession of the wealth she so values and enjoys, for Derrick Hurst's guilt might never have been proven if she had not frightened him away.

### A SCARED DUELIST.

ON a certain occasion since the beginning of 1871, in the little town of Ouachita City, La., on the banks of the Ouachita River, about twenty-five miles above the city of Monroe, two gentlemen (Johnson and Jones) concluded to play a game of "seven-up" at \$5. They took their time, and interspersed the game with several drinks. They finally finished the game. Johnson, being winner, raked in the money.

Jones studied about it a while. He made up his mind that it was not right for Johnson to take the money, as they were neighbors—not gamblers, anyway—and were only in fun. He said:

"You are not going to take that money, are you?"

"Yes, indeed, I am," said Johnson.

"Well," said Jones, "you had as well take it out of my pocket."

"Now, Jones, take that back."

"I shall not take that back; and if you are not satisfied, help yourself in any way you choose."

"But, Jones, I insist that you take it back, because I don't steal, myself."

"I shall not take it back; and I now repeat that you might have stolen that money out of my pocket. If you wish a difficulty, you can have it any way you like."

"Well, then, we will shoot it out," said Johnson.

"Very well, sir," said Jones, "mention your time and place."

Without further ceremony, all the arrangements were made for the duel to take place that evening. Many of the neighbors were there, and concluded at once to have the fight come off. They knew Johnson, who proposed the shooting, would back out unless he could be encouraged. They knew, on the other hand, that Jones would stand up without flinching. The seconds loaded the pistols with blank cartridges, and informed Johnson of the fact, but did not let Jones in the secret. They did this to make Johnson stand, which, of course, made him fearless. He went to the appointed place, and Jones was there, cool and calm.

The moment for action arrived, and all parties took their positions—the distance being ten paces. The pistols were handed to Johnson and Jones, in death-like silence—every one being as serious as death. The count commenced: "One!"

"Stop!" said Johnson, "It is understood by all parties that there ain't no bullets in these pistols!"

Jones, hearing this, and knowing nothing of it before, rather staggered forward reeling, looked into the muzzle of his pistol, and cried out, "I'll be hanged if there ain't bullets in mine!" and at the same time pulled down on Johnson.

This was two much for Johnson. He broke for the nearest house, which was about two hundred yards, and they say he doubled up like a four-bladed knife, and has not been seen since, but sent word back that all might "shoot it out" who chose, but he wanted none in his. Jones won the field against all odds.

### "Ain't Got 'em."

Three of the dirtiest, most ragged little ragamuffins in this city entered one of our magnificent drug stores. Marching up to the counter, one said:

"I want a cent's worth of rock candy!"

"Get out, you ragamuffin!—we don't sell a cent's worth of rock candy!"

Slowly and sadly they filed out of the store. On the sidewalk a consultation took place. They re-entered the door.

"Mister, do you sell three cents worth of rock candy?"

"Yes!"

"Well, we ain't got 'em!"—and the procession moved out again!

### HOW LANE PAID HIS NOTE.

HARRY LANE, a young farmer was in the office of Dr. Metcalf, for the purpose of settling his account, and not having the money, he had just given a note for the hundred dollars found to be due the doctor. As he left the office the physician had suggested to the young man that if he would furnish him a subject for dissection, it would be an easy method to cancel the note. Rather indignantly this offer was refused, and Harry Lane left for his home, where he did not arrive until after it was dark.

When he reached the gate, his wife, a pretty little woman, met him with a lantern.

"I'm so glad you've come, Harry," she said, in a relieved, overjoyed tone.

"And why, my little puss?"

"I've been afraid all the time."

"Afraid?"

"Yes, but do come and have supper before you unharness, Harry."

"And of what were you afraid, Em?"

"Well, I'll tell you. George Morris came here a little while after you left—He came and sat down before the fire, and acted dreadful strange. Pretty soon I found out that he was about half drunk."

"And what did he do?"

"Nothing, only drink and talk and drink, and I was so afraid of him. I've heard so much of people being killed by drunken men, and he was so dreadfully drunk, Harry. Well, he stayed until near dark, and then he emptied the jug that he had with him and fell over dead drunk."

"In the house?"

"Yes."

"And is he there now?"

"Yes."

"Perfectly insensible?"

"Yes, as insensible as a log."

Harry Lane gave a sudden leap into the house and a wild hurrah, and quite startled his quiet little wife. He had nearly unharnessed his team, but he replaced the harness as quickly as possible.

"What are you going to do, Harry?"

"Hitch Bonny and fleet to the sled again."

"For what?"

"Never mind. You are quite sure that George Morris is insensible?"

"Yes, and has been so for half an hour."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the young man. "Whoa, Bonny, stand still, Fleet, my man—ha, ha!"

"Why what does ail you, Harry; are you crazy? What are you doing, for pity sake?"

"Just wait and see, Mrs. Em."

Harry fastened the horses to the bars, and ran up the well-trodden path to the house, followed hastily by his wife.

"Get me a sheet, quick, Em!"

"What for?"

"Never mind—there, that's it. Help me to wrap this fellow up in it. He'll make a capital subject—ha, ha."

"What are you going to do?"

"Never mind—just take hold of his feet, Em; steady, now, that's it. Don't think me crazy, I'll tell you about it when I get back. Have supper ready when I come."

George Morris was placed on the sled. Shortly afterwards, Harry Lane knocked at the back door of the doctor's office. The worthy Doctor Metcalf presented himself.

"Where shall I take the body?" he questioned, in a low tone.

"Right through into the dissecting room and lay it on the table. There I thought you'd think better of it, and you've been quick, too. Stopped at the graveyard as you went along, didn't you?"

"And the note?"

"Here it is, you are welcome to it, Mr. Lane. You're a good hand at such little matters, and I shall have to call on you again."

"If you like the subject, I may be able to furnish you more of the same kind," replied the young man, tearing the note into strips, and closing the door with a "good evening, doctor."

Doctor Metcalf chuckled to himself, well pleased with his success. For half an hour, perhaps he sat in his office chair whiffing a fragrant Havana. At the end of that time he took up the candle and went into the dissecting-room, to see what kind of a subject had been brought for his class to work upon the next day.

He held the candle in his left hand and turned back the sheet with his right. The fumes of liquor met his nostrils.—He started with a ludicrous combination of anger, surprise and amazement upon his countenance. "George Morris, by all that's evil!" he ejaculated, "Drunk!"

Now, George Morris had married doctor Metcalf's sister, and for a long time the doctor had been trying to get her to leave her husband, as he had become brutal and abusive, but she, with a woman's tenderness, still clung to him.

Doctor Frank Metcalf saw that he had been sold, and to the tune of one hundred dollars, too. His first determination was to give Harry Lane a piece of his mind; his second to have the value of his money at any rate. Students are generally in for sport, and those in the institution superintended by Dr. Metcalf, were no exception to the general rule. Several choice spirits among them were sought

out by the victimized doctor, and instructed in the subject under consideration, and the part they were required to perform. Everything was in readiness about the time George Morris awoke from this drunken stupor.

He looked around—ghastly skeletons, horrid grinning skulls, fleshless bones, met his gaze on every side—he tried to move; he could no more have raised an arm or a foot than he could have flown. A dim light revealed all this to his astonished gaze—a moment more he was in impenetrable darkness.

Suddenly right before him in flaming characters, he saw the word Perdition!

He trembled, he groaned, he shrieked in terror! Was he in the abode of the lost? Again a dim light revealed by his side a horrid figure, that might have represented the Prince of Darkness.

"Mortal one," spoke a ghostly voice, "you have come to this dreadful abode for the sin of drunkenness."

"Mercy, mercy!" shrieked the trembling man.

"Mercy! That never enters here. Behold you have brought your own ruin upon yourself."

Again all was darkness. Groans, horrid yells and shrieks fell upon his ear, cold fingers passed over his face, and dreadful pinchings were inflicted on various parts of his body. He shrieked aloud—he gave vent to his agony and terror, in groans and cries for mercy.

"You were a drunkard when living," said an unearthly voice.

"Oh, yes! yes!" groaned the unhappy man.

"You had a good wife and interesting children."

"Oh, yes, dear Satan, the very best of wives, the loveliest of children."

"And you left them to suffer and starve. O, you incorrigible man!" said the unearthly voice.

"Alas, yes!"

"And therefore receive your reward!"

And the pinchings and burnings were continued, and an almost intolerable odor of sulphur besieged his nostrils. Again he shrieked and pleaded for mercy.

"O, mercy, mercy!"

"You had no mercy upon the wife who loved you, or the children who cried for bread," said the unearthly voice, "yet upon one condition you may return to them."

"And then, what is that? Any condition?"

"And remember I shall watch you, and if you ever cause that noble wife of yours a tear—"

"Oh, I never will!"

"Then, remember," said the ghostly voice again, "remember!"

Chloroform rendered the miserable man insensible. In that condition he was conveyed to a barn near by, and placed in a manger, there to recover himself as best he might.

George Morris never again drank of spirituous liquor. He became a sober man, a tender and provident father. One day he told his wife in confidence, that the reason he had reformed, was because he appreciated her generous devotion, but we know better.

For a while Harry Lane was a little shy of the doctor, and when he did meet him, the worthy doctor shook him warmly by the hand, saying that he did not particularly wish for any more subjects, he thanked him very much for the one he had brought him, as by that means a most inveterate drunkard has been reformed, and a broken-hearted wife rescued from the very brink of the grave.

Harry Lane asked no questions, but when the name of George Morris was proposed a few years afterwards for the nomination of county judge, he gave a peculiar whistle, and said, in a low tone, "Well, it all comes of being the doctor's subject."

There was a jolly old captain in the 18th Missouri regiment of mounted infantry. He was every thing good and efficient as an officer, a friend and a gentleman, but he never deemed a close study of the dictionary as essential to getting a living or subduing a Southern rebellion. One hot day the captain, floating around, sat down under the arbor in front of a fellow-officer's tent, and picking up a late paper, commenced to read aloud the heading of the telegraph column as follows:

"Repulse—of—a—sortie—at—Charleston."

Says he, after musing a moment:

"Sortie? Sortie? A Sortie? Cap. have the rebels any general by the name of A Sortie?"

"Certainly I've heard of old Sortie frequently."

"Well, I guess I have," said the captain. "Come to think now, I've heard of his being repulsed very often."

### A Good Retort.

Some years ago, as a Scotch clergyman was walking one summer afternoon, two young beaux took it into their heads to break a jest upon the old parson. Walking briskly up to him, they asked him if he could tell them the color of the devil's wig.—The worthy clergyman, surveying them attentively for a few seconds, made the following reply:

"Truly, here is a most surprising case—two men have served a master all the days of their life, and can't tell the color of his wig!"

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