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NOT GUILTY.

A Scene in Court.

I SHALL never forget my first vision of William Denton. It was in the courthouse at Little-Rock, Arkansas, in the summer of 1834. The occasion itself possessed a terrible interest, well-calculated to fix in the memory all its circumstances. A vast concourse of spectators had assembled to witness the trial of a young and very beautiful girl on an indictment for murder. The Judge waited at the moment for the sheriff to bring in his prisoner, and the eyes of the impatient multitude eagerly watched the door for the expected advent, when suddenly a stranger entered, whose remarkable appearance riveted universal attention. Here is his portrait done as accurately as pen can sketch it.

A figure tall, lean, sinewy and straight as an arrow; a brow massive, soaring, and smooth as polished marble, intersected by a large blue vein forked like the tongue of a serpent; eyes reddish yellow, resembling a wrathful eagle's—as brilliant, as fearfully piercing; and finally, a mouth slight, cold and sneering—the living embodiment of unbreathed curses! He was habited in leather, ornamented, after the fashion of Indian costume, with beads of every color in the rainbow.

Elbowing his way proudly and slowly through the throng, and seemingly altogether unconscious that he was regarded as a phenomenon that needed explanation, the singular being advanced, and, with the haughty air of a king taking his throne, seated himself within the bar, crowded as it was with the disciples of Coke and Blackstone, several of whom, it was known, esteemed themselves far superior to those old and famous masters.

The contrast between the disdainful countenance and outlandish garb of the stranger excited especially the risibility of the lawyers, and the junior members began a suppressed titter, which soon grew louder and swept around the circle. They doubtless supposed the intruder to be some wild hunter of the mountains, who had never before seen the interior of a hall of justice.

Instantly the cause and object of the laughter perceived it. Turning his head gradually, so as to give each laugher a look of infinite scorn, he ejaculated the single word—"Savages!"

No pen can describe the unspeakable malice, the defiant force which he threw into that term; no language can express the infernal furore of his utterance, although it hardly exceeded a whisper. But he accentuated every letter as if it were a separate emission of fire that scorched his quivering lips, laying horrible emphasis on the letter 's' both at the beginning and ending of the word. It was a mixed growl, intermediate betwixt the growl of a red tiger and the hiss of a rattlesnake—"Savages!" It cured everybody of the disposition to laugh.

The general gaze, however, was then diverted by the advent of the fair prisoner, who came in surrounded by her guard. The apparition was enough to drive even a cynic mad, for hers was a style of beauty to bewilder the tamest imagination and heart a gleaming picture, enamelled with fire and fixed in a frame of gold from the stars. It was the spell of an enchantment to be felt as well as seen. We might feel it in the flashes of her countenance, clear as sunlight, brilliant as the iris; in the classic contour of her features, symmetrical as if cut with an artist's chisel; in her hair of rich ringlets, flowing without a braid, softer than silk, finer than gossamer; in her eyes, blue as the heaven of southern summer, large, liquid, dreamy; in her motions, graceful, swimming, like the gentle waftures of a bird's wing in the sunny air, in her figure, slight, ethereal—a sylph's or a seraph's; and more than all, in the everlasting smile of the rosy lips, so frank, so serene, so like starlight, and yet thrilling the soul as a shock of electricity.

As the unfortunate girl, so tastefully dressed, so incomparable as to personal charms, calmly took her place before the bar of her judge, a murmur of admiration arose from the multitude, which the prompt interposition of the court could scarcely repress from swelling into deafening cheers. The murmur was followed by a loud unearthly groan from a solitary bosom, as of some one in mortal anguish. All eyes were centered on the stranger, and all were struck with surprise and wonder, for his features writhed as if in torture—that his rain of tears could not assuage. But what could be the cause of this sudden emotion? Could any connection exist between him, the apparently rude bunter, and that fairy girl, more beautiful than a blossom of summer, and in countenance celestial as a star?

The judge turned to the prisoner—"Emma Greenleaf, the court has been informed that your counsel Colonel Linton, is sick and cannot attend. Have you employed any other?"

She answered in a voice sweet as the warble of the nightingale, and clear as the song of the skylark—"My enemies have bribed all the lawyers, even my own, to be sick; but God will defend the innocent!"

At this response, so touching in its simple pathos, a portion of the auditors buzzed applause and the rest wept. On the in-

stant, however, the leather-robed stranger, whose aspect had previously excited so much merriment, approached the prisoner, and whispered something in her ear. She bounded several inches from the floor, uttered a wild shriek, and then stood pale and trembling as if in the presence of a ghost from the grave. All, now, could perceive that there must be some mysterious connection between the two and the scene assumed the profound interest of a genuine romance. The stranger addressed the court in accents as sonorous as the tone of an organ—"May it please your honor, I will defend the legal rights of the lady."

"What?" exclaimed the astonished judge, "are you a licensed attorney?"

"The question is immaterial and irrelevant," replied the stranger with a sneer, "as your statute entitles any person to act as counsel at the request of a party."

"But does the prisoner request it?" asked the judge.

"Let her speak for herself said the stranger.

"I do," was her answer, as a long-drawn sigh escaped that seemed to rend her very heart-strings.

"What is your name, as it must be placed on the record?" interrogated the judge.

"William Denton," said the stranger.

The case immediately progressed. We will briefly epitomise the substance of the evidence. About twelve months previously the defendant had arrived in the town, and opened an establishment of millinery. Residing in a small room back of her shop and all alone, she prepared the various articles of her trade with unwearied toil and consummate taste. Her habits were secluded, modest, and retiring; and hence she might have hoped to escape notoriety, but for the perilous gift of that extraordinary beauty, which too often, and to the poor and friendless, proves a curse. She was soon sought after by those gay fire-flies of fashion, the business of whose life is everywhere seduction and ruin. But the beautiful stranger rejected them all alike with unutterable scorn and loathing.

Among the disappointed admirers was one of a character from which the fair milliner had everything to fear. Hiram Shore belonged to a family at once opulent, influential, and disappointed. He was himself licentious, brave, and revengeful, and a duelist of established and terrible fame. It was generally known that he had made advances to win the favor of the lovely Emma and had shared the fate of all her other woers—a disdainful repulse.

At nine o'clock on Christmas night, 1833, the people of Little-Rock were startled by a loud scream, as of some one in mortal terror; while following that, with hardly an interval, came successive reports of fire-arms—one, two, three—a dozen deafening explosions. They flew to the shop of the milliner, whence the sounds emanated, and pushed back the unfastened door. A dreadful scene was presented. There stood in the centre of the room, with a revolver in each hand, every barrel discharged, her features pale, her eyes flashing wildly, and her lips parted with an awful smile! And there at her feet, weltering in his warm blood, his bosom literally riddled with shot, lay the all-dreaded duelist, Hiram Shore, gasping in the last agony. He articulated but a single sentence—"Tell my mother that I am dead and gone to h—ll!" and instantly expired.

"In God's name, who did this?" exclaimed the appalled spectators.

"I did it!" said the beautiful milliner, in her sweet, silvery accents. "I did it to save my honor!"

Such is a brief abstract of the essential circumstances, developed in the examination of witnesses. The testimony closed and the pleadings began.

First of all, Fowler, Pike, and Ashley, (all famous lawyers at that time in the south-west) spoke in succession for the prosecution. They about equally partitioned their eloquence betwixt the prisoner and her advocate, covering the latter with such sarcastic wit, railery, and ridicule as made it a doubt whether he or his client was the party then on trial. As to Denton, however, he seemed to pay not the slightest attention to his opponents, but remained motionless, with his forehead bowed on his hands, like one buried in deep thought or in slumber.

When his time came, however, he suddenly sprang to his feet, crossed the bar, and took a position almost touching the foreman of the jury, he then commenced in a whisper, but in a whisper so wild, peculiar, and indescribably distinct as to fill the hall from floor to galleries.

At the outset he dealt in pure logic, analyzing and combining the proven facts, till the whole mass of confused evidence looked transparent as a globe of crystal, through which the innocence of his client shone luminous as a sunbeam, while the jurors nodded to each other signs of thorough conviction. The thrilling whisper and concentrated argument, and language simple as a child's, had satisfied the demands of the intellect, and this, too, in only twenty minutes. It was like the work of a mathematical demonstration.

He then changed his posture so as to sweep the bar with his glance, and, like a raging lion, rushed upon his adversaries, tearing and rending their sophistries into atoms.

His sallow face glowing like a red-hot iron, the forked blue vein swelled and wreathed on his brow, his eyes resembled live coals, and his voice was the clangor of a trumpet. I never, before or since, listened to such appalling denunciation. It was like Jove's eagle charging a flock of crows. It was like Jove himself hurling thunderbolts in the shuddering eyes of inferior gods. And yet in the highest temper of his fury he seemed wonderfully calm. He employed no gesture save one—the flash of a long bony finger directly in the pallid faces of his legal foes. He painted their venality and unmanly baseness in coalescing for money to crush a friendless female, till a shout of stifled wrath broke from the multitude, and some of the sworn panel cried "Shame!" And thus the orator had carried another point—had aroused a perfect storm of indignation against the prosecutors—and this also in twenty minutes.

He changed his theme once more. His voice grew mournful as a funeral dirge and his eyes fled with tears, as he traced a vivid picture of man's cruelties and woman's wrongs, with special applications in the case of his client, till half the audience wept like children.

But it was in the peroration that he reached the zenith both of terror and sublimity. His features were livid as those of a corpse; his very hair appeared to stand on end; his nerves shook as with a palsy; he tossed his hands wildly toward heaven, each finger spread apart and quivering like the flame of a candle, as he closed with the last words of the deceased Hiram Shore—"Tell my mother that I am dead and gone to hell!" His emphasis on the word hell embodied the elements of all horror. It was a wail of immeasurable despair—a wild howl of infinite torture. No language can depict its effect on all who heard it. Men groaned, women shrieked, and one poor mother was borne away in convulsions.—The entire speech occupied but an hour.

The jury rendered a verdict of "not guilty" without leaving the box, and three tremendous cheers, like successive roars of an earthquake, shook the court-house from dome to corner-stone, testifying the joy of the people. At the same moment the beautiful milliner bounded to her feet and clasped the triumphant advocate in her arms, exclaiming—"Oh, my husband! my dear husband!"

Denton smiled, seized her hand, whispered a word in her ear, and the two left the bar together, proceeding to the landing, and embarked on a steamboat bound for New Orleans. It seems that they had previously parted on account of his causeless jealousy, after which she assumed a false name and came to Little Rock. How he learned her danger, I could never ascertain.

They returned to Texas. The husband was a colonel in the revolution, and escaped its perils only to fall the next year in a terrible fight with the Camanches. A new county in the cross-timbers, a country of wild woods romantic as his own eloquence, and of sun-bright prairie beautiful as his own Emma's sweet face, commemorates his name—the name of a transcendent star that set too soon, which had now been the first luminary in the political sky of Texas, if not in the circle of the whole Union, for he was nature's Demosthenes of the western woods!

A Good Wife—Or a Tough Story.

A rich old gentleman, somewhat famous for his anecdotal powers, told a story the other evening which shows that he either has a most remarkable wife, or else that he has a remarkable faculty for extending the truth. He said he had not been hard pressed for money during late years, but he was once when he was doing a large business. "One day in particular," he said, "I looked so terribly glum at breakfast, that my wife discovered something was the matter. 'What ails you, my dear?' says she. 'Well,' says I, 'if you will know, I have got seventeen thousand dollars to pay to day, and nothing to do it with.' 'Is that all?' says she. 'And enough too,' says I. With that she says nothing, but whips up stairs, and brings me down the seventeen thousand dollars, all in the small change I had given her, from time to time, to do her marketing with."

A facetious individual not many miles from Danbury, Conn., sought to "draw his wife out" by pretending to be found dead with an empty laudanum phial by his side. And that lady was a good deal shocked at first, but having read that a needle introduced into the human flesh would indicate on the surface whether the flesh was dead, and being a woman of eminent practicality, she at once armed herself with a polished instrument of nearly two inches growth and with throbbing heart and bated breath introduced a good share of its length into an appropriate portion of the deceased. What the surface of the needle really indicated was not learned, as he took it with him as he passed through the wash.

A wife having lost her husband, was inconsolable for his death. "Leave me to my grief," she cried, sobbing. "you know the extreme sensibility of my nerves—a mere nothing upsets them!"

ENIGMA DEPARTMENT.

A RIDDLE.

God made Adam out of dust, But thought it best to make me first. So I was made before the man, According to his holy plan. My body He made complete, But without legs or arms or feet. A living creature I became, And Adam gave me my name. Then from his presence I withdrew, No more of Adam I ever knew. Thousands of miles I go in fear, But seldom on the earth appear. My body was complete and whole, But I was made without a soul. But God in me did something see, And put a living soul in me. A son in me the Lord did claim, And took from me that soul again. And when that soul from me had fled, I was the same as when first made. And without legs or arms or soul, I labor now from pole to pole; I travel hard from day to night, To fallen man I give great light. Thousands of people, young and old, Do by my death great light behold. The Scriptures I cannot believe, Whether right or wrong, I can't conceive. They are to me an empty sound, Although my name therein is found. No fear of death doth trouble me, For happiness I cannot see. To Heaven above I ne'er shall go, Nor to the grave, or hell below. And when my friends these lines you read, Go search the Scriptures with all speed, And if my name you find not there, It must be strange I do declare.

Who of our readers who have not already heard this riddle, can send us the correct answer.

A Problem.

How long would it take a squirrel to carry 100 ears of corn to his nest, provided he carries 3 ears the first trip, 4 ears the second trip, 3 ears the third trip, and so on alternately; supposing it takes him two minutes to each trip?

A Joke on Butler.

A RATHER amusing story is in circulation at the expense of the eminent gentleman from Massachusetts commonly called "Old strabismus." At the President's levee the other night, which was densely crowded, an old lady from the interior somewhere, in a faint condition, requested her husband to get her an ice.

"Can't be did," responded "hub" in some irritation! "there ain't no refreshments here."

"Don't believe it: Didn't we get plenty at Belknap's the other night?" the old woman said angrily; "now go and get me an ice and some lemonade."

"I tell you now don't be a fool; there ain't no refreshments, everybody says so," grunted the lord and master.

"You are quite mistaken, sir," said the Hon. S. S. Cox, who happened to be near, and who never loses an opportunity to put in a joke. "The President always provides substantially. There is his butler, whose business it is to show ladies to the upper room," and the Hon. little jester pointed to General Butler. "You'll find him a little stuck up and cross, but you mustn't mind that; tell him to get you terrapins."

This was said so gravely that the two straggled through the crowd to where Gen. Butler was talking to some ladies.

"I say, mister, I am told you are the butler," said the man.

"I'm General Butler," replied Old Strabismus pleasantly, thinking the two country people filled with admiration of his greatness.

"I don't care whether you are a General Butler or not, but my wife wants some terrapins and lemonade."

"Sir?" snorted old B., in amazement and disgust.

"Oh: don't take on airs, old cock. Come now, hurry up them terrapins.

"You must be drunk, sir; you must be drunk!"

"No he ain't," screamed the wife. "He's a Knight Templar, he ain't drunk, but I guess you are."

Roars of laughter greeted this, in which S. S. Cox was forced to join. General Butler, reddened in the face and began puffing his cheek out in the most violent manner.

"I don't understand this extraordinary conduct. What do you want, sir—what do you want?"

"Terrapins, I tell you."

"What do you take me for, you cussed fool?" roared Benjamin.

"You call me a cussed fool and I'll hit you on the snout," screamed the man.

At this juncture an officer of the police seized the belligerent husband and led him away amid much laughter. Butler, turning suddenly, saw the mischief maker.

"I say, Cox, did you do that?"

"Well, yes, I'm afraid I did."

"Well, I owe the terrapins, and I'll pay you, mind that—I'll pay you."

And the two walked lovingly away.

A young gentleman who had just married a little beauty, says: "She would have been taller, but she is made of such precious materials that nature couldn't afford it."