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ONLY A LITTLE CLOUD.

TAKE courage-'tis a little cloud That soon will pass away; The hearts that now with grief are bowed May only grieve to-day. To-morrow, up the azure height, The sun may dart his beam, And then one joyous burst of light O'er mount and vale shall stream.

> When thwarted plans and baffled hopes Become our only store, And the crushed spirit barely copes With ills unknown before-Despond not ; yet the tide will turn-The gales propitious play ; Take courage-'tis a little cloud That soon will pass away.

> When doubts eclipse the ray of joy, And fears their shadows cast; When rugged seems the way to bliss, And foes come crowding fast-Faint not; a mightier power than thine Is pledged these foes to slay ; Light shall at last around thee shine-The cloud shall pass away.

AND yet alas ! the real ills of life Claim the full vigor of a mind prepar'd, Prepar'd for patient, long, laborious strife, Its guide experience, and truth its guard ; We fare on earth as other men have fared Were they successful ? Let us not despair ; Was disappointment of their sole reward ? Yet shall their tale instruct, if it declare How they have borne the load ourselves are

doom'd to bear. [Beattie.

MY PRETTY HOUSEKEEPER.

And as she sat down and placed her slender led me; now doubling and fluttering almost house. Again and again I rang. The bell, hand on the spotless table cloth, I could under my nose ; now gyrating with exnot tell which was the whitest.

"The eggs are simply perfect, Mrs. George," was my reply ; and I never tasted better bread.

"I always have my eyes on Betty when she is making bread, Mr. Haynes. So much depends upon these humble culinary efforts. Alas !"-and she sighed softly-"we live in degenerated days, sir, when women seek their pleasure outside of the sacred portals of home. I have never allowed myself, sir, to be distracted from my legitimate pursuits."

"I do believe you, Mrs. George, said I, warmly, and a diamond solitaire glittered before my mental vision, or perhaps I should say sentimental vision; but how was a man to hold out long against the charms of so nobly planned a woman, with taper fingers and gentle, downcast eyes, and such blessed notions of the beauty of domestic life ?"

"I trust your breakfast pleased you, sir."

"Upon my word, Mrs. George," 1 said, her bewildering eyes smiling into mine. " I was never so charmed in my life.

She blushed. What had I said to bring that exquisite dye upon her cheeks? I grew frightened, and backed away from the table, pulling on my gloves.

"How soon do you go, sir?" she asked, raising her slender fingers playing with a little chain that relieved the dead black of her dress.

"I leave in just twenty minutes, Mrs. George."

"And as you are to be gone all day-am I correct, Mr. Haynes ?" I nodded.

"As you are to be gone all day, and I invariably see to such things myself, would you leave the key of the safe with me ?-The silver has long been in need of scouring, and you really should not be so extravagant as to send it to a silversmith's for that purpose, as most gentlemen do .--I have a wonderful powder-my dear old mother gave me the receipt; for indeed sir"-a plaintive tenderness gliding into her pathetic tones-"we have had silver in our family ; my mother was a Hancock. She paused. My glance, I trust, was full of sympathy.

"Yes, sir, a Hancock. But reverses, sir, and reverses swept everything away"-with a stately wave of her white hand. "The powder is invaluable. I might, could I condescend, make my fortune with it .--Do you think you had better leave the key, or," drawing her fine figure up, "will you

ultant motion, that humbly expressed the jubilee of uncontrollable jollity ; now whirling into somebody's garden ; now whisking around a barber's pole ; now bobbing along the edge of a fence, till at last-at last-I had it !

Death could not grip harder than I held on to that eratic brim. It was, I felt, a hat gifted with extraordinary powers of locomotion, and I did not mean to let it have its own sweet will again.

I pulled out my watch with one hand, holding still to my hat with the other. It wanted one minute to seven, and the train was five blocks off. Hoping against hope, I set off on a run and at the corner of the third block had the supreme satisfaction of hearing the final whistle, and the swift thud and thunder of the departing train.

I was balked, and gave my hat a savage pull as I stopped to consider what had best be done. I anathematized hats of every persuasion from the orthodox stove-pipe to the Quaker broad-brim. To have crushed the offending member on my head as flat as a pancake, and then finished it with my penknife would have been balm to my aggravated soul.

Turning my steps in the direction of my office, I walked moodily on, a disappointed so fondly anticipated, the merry greeting of friends, the sight of old, long banished faces, I was still bound to the perplexities of an interminable law case.

It would be as well, perhaps, to attend to business, I thought, with rueful visage; and I prepared to resign myself with the best grace possible.

My office was nearly two miles from my house. After a leisurely walk I arrived there just as the clock was striking eight. Up I went, scattering straws and papers, till I gained the cheerless, uncarpeted passage, and saw opposite, my own square of painted glass, and the card, " Not in till to-morrow; and then I found I had left my office key in my other vest pocket in dressing room wardrobs at home.

Clearly had I begun the day wrong foot foremost, as my old nurse used to say when everything went wrong. What should I do next? I meditated upon the matter going down stairs, utterly oblivious of a basket of oranges at my elbow till the vicious scream of the old fruit peddler startled

" Sacre ! sare, you are no zhentleman." I turned, thrilled with horror. The oranges were racing pell mell down stairs, to the delight of several urchins, and out itter. I, unfortunate had sent them there with an unconscious movement of my arm as I gesticulated to myself.

a powerful one, jangled spitefully, as if it lifting ! took pleasure in insisting that there was nobody at home. I descended the steps ; I went around to the back gate, and succeeded in loosening the hook that confined it, with my pen-knife. All was as silent as elsewhere ; the servants must be gone ; Jip must be gone, "What the deuce is in it all ?" I muttered impatiently.

Perhaps Mrs. George had postponed her silver cleaning till afternoon and had gone to the matinee ; but where were the servants?

There was fortunately a window at the back part of the house that could be unfastened from the outside. The contrivance was one of my own, and nobody was in the secret but myself. I opened the window, and had just fastened my knee comfortably on the stone coping when a heavy hand grasped my ellow.

I noticed something suspicious, and followed you, you rascal ! Are you not ashamed-a man looking like a gentleman breaking into a house like a common thief."

The fellow held me in his grasp as if it were a vice. I looked over my shoulder. A star blazed on the wretch's blue-coated breast; there was a guilt number on his cap, his breath smelled of-but we won't mention that ; his nose was a turn-up, his man. Instead of the holiday which I had hair was a little reddish-this is originaland the whole contour of the man, told of his Paul Pry instinct. I felt my eyes flash, my cheeks burn, and I mentally resolved, after crushing and cutting, to put my unlucky hat that had led me into all these scrapes, into the kitchen stove.

"What do you wish, sir ?" I exclaimed with as much dignity and severity as my very peculiar and cramped condition would permit. "Unhand me-quick, sir! I am no thief, but the lawful owner of No. 1440. My name is Haynes, Robert Haynes; go round and look at the door-plate."

"None of your blather, young man," said the officer sternly, "you've scrutinized that door-plate pretty thoroughly. I have had my eyes on you for some time."

"You don't know what you are talking about. Let me get down, sir," said 1 hotly. "I tell you I am Mr. Haynes, Robt. Haynes, law office on Cooper street. I shall not condescend to explain to you how I happened not to have the key of my own front door. You have only to accompany me to Judge Holt's on the right here, and ask any member of the family whether I am or am not Mr. Robert Haynes."

"Very well got off young gentleman, but you must allow me to take your arm."

"I am not in the habit of walking arm

two revolvers. in arm with a polleceman," said I haugh

scend to any little petty meanness, to house-

I entered the domicile at the back window, bidding the policeman be within call. The first thing I saw in the basement passage was the dead body of poor Jip, my pet terrier. He had evidently been poisoned.

I walked through the lower rooms. A costly bronze clock and three expensive vases were gone from the parlor shelf ; also a very beautiful little group in terra cotta, for which I had given an extravagant price. On a closer examination I saw that the edges of my new carpet were loose. They had certainly been tacked down before.

I opened the door into the front hall, which literally swarmed with packages.-They stood on the chairs, on the rack on the table-everywhere. Not caring to stop to examine these evidences of dishonesty, I went up to the second story. There on the toilet table lay a neatly folded note, of which the following is a transcript :

"DEAR MAT .--- I have packed everything that could be conveniently carried—the clothes, the silver, the books, and as many light ornaments as possible. I think you might easily take the carpets, if you are expeditious and can rely upon your men.— The old gentleman (I bit my tongue) won't be home till noon to-morrow. I've circulated the report that he intends to dispose of some of his furniture ; consequently you might fill a couple of large vans. The money I have in my possesion. I contrived to loosen the carpets at the edges, but could not move the heavy furniture. You could not move the neavy furniture. Four can fold the first, and your men can carry out the latter. I hope you have followed my directions as to dress; the neighbors will take you for Mr. Haynes. If it had not been for you, Mat, I would let him make love to me. I could twist has about my finger. "After you are through I shall be at the

place designated. The servants are in my pay, and I have sent them off. You cannot tell how patiently I have looked for-ward to the completion of this little scheme. My dear Mat if we get off (we shall get off) we are made for life.

"And now my darling, farewell for a short time. I wish I could have seen you, but this letter must suffice. Destroy it at

So she could twist me around her finger could she? The truth is this bold assertion made me wince ; I felt a fool down to my finger ends.

The Star joined me at a signal, and we went up stairs together.

"It's the most audacious thing I ever heard tell of !" he exclaimed. "We will wait up here and see the play out. I'll bow the shutters and there'll be some fun before long. Have you got any shootingiron ?"

I went to my room and returned with

REPEAT again, and to myself, that Mrs. George is an admirable housekeeper, and a very superior woman. Her eyes are sparkling and penetrating ; her hair ripples and waves like that of a child 1 am-ahem 1-almost charmed with Mrs. George. Not only are the eyes of Mrs. George extremely penetrative, but her conception of character is something marvelous. I confess I was astonished when she held before me the painful delinquencies of my two old servants, Starkey and Tom had lived with me fourteen years, but upon the advent of this admirable woman I suddenly learned that I was being plucked ; that half my meats were taken off to poor relations; that the cat was not answerable for my butcher's inflated bills, and that the dog has lived very comfortably on tableleavings since then. It is very plain that Mrs. George is an immensly superior woman. I like her frank way of speaking about the furniture.

"A gentleman in your condition, and of your appearance"-yes, she was pleased to say, of your appearance-"should not have his house shabbily furnished, Sir. Not that I care. For myself, plain three ply and walnut, or even chestnut; but for these delightful rooms, Turkey, sir, with brilliant colors, and a set, sir, in satin and gilt."

Well, of course, I had the parlors thoroughly refurnished, and I laid a neat new Brussels in Mrs. George's own room. To see that lovely woman's gratitude ! it was beantiful.

Thus was I soliloquizing one merning over my eggs and toast, when Mrs. George came gliding in with the airy grace of a sylph. I never saw a sylph in my life, but I am sure that is the proper thing to say.

" Really, Mrs. George-" 1 begun.

"Now don't scold me, dear sir. You see I know my duty"-with that smile that touches my susceptible heart, as the trust ; I always see to such things myself."

take the silver-

"Mrs. George, I beg-Here are the keys, Mrs. George.

There were ten thousand dollars in that safe, and I detached the key of the money drawer.

"Thank you ; you will hardly know your plate to-morrow," she said, with pretty laughing lips. "Pray, pray wrap up well; mine too, for with one of his most frantic it is such a wind !" Thump went my heart.

"You will be home-when? I always prefer to have an explicit understanding, so that everything may be in readiness."

"To-morrow at twelve, Mrs. George," was my reply, wondering how it would seem to kiss a pair of lips just as dewy and pouting as hers, and then I tore myself from the temptation, shook hands with Mrs. George, and left the house,

"Straws show which way the wind blows," says the old adage. It is my opinion that hats occasionally do that little favor for mankind. At least mine took the liberty so do so that morning.

1 had now ten minutes in which to reach the B--station. The depot was only a few squares distant, and I was walking as comfortably as I could, bracing myself against the wind, when a sweeping gust came around the corner. Something was lifted from my head; it was my hat.

My first impulse was to look around to see if anybody was laughing-I always laugh myself at a flying hat-and then I betook myself to sport. The hat only ambled ; I was sure to catch it. It lodged against a gas-post; my hand was almost on it, when the twin to that other gust came racing along, and off went my hat. It was very early, and there were but few people abroad.

I heard now and then a faint laugh; a scurvey little urchin sang out, "Go it clattering silverware, no anything. boots !" a Hibernian maid, carrying a large parcel in a small paper, cried, "Shure the hat's leading that man a chase !" but on I

Nothing stirs mutiny in a man's soul quicker than the imputation of not being gentleman. A five dollar bill, however, healed this noisy foreigner's wounds, and bows the peddler repeated, "Sare, I mistake; I see you are von zhentlemen."

There was nothing for it now but to go home again. I pleased myself with pictures of Mrs. George busy over my silver. I make no secret of saying that I like to see delicate, refined women at work. The bare, round blue-veined arms, temptingly displayed just below the elbow; the pretty handkerchief tied over the dark flowing tresses; the stout linen apron jealously keeping guard from throat to toes; the quick, fine step; the musical gurgle of some sweet favorite song ; the dash and spirit they contrive to throw into commonplace observances ; the mimic bluster when one of the stupid masculines interferes with their privileges, if it is only trying to find the shoe brush-make a charming aggregate delightful to one who has never had more intimate acquaintance than his housekeeper.

So should I see Mrs. George, perchance, herself rubbing with those white tape fingers the old silver that my mother once delighted to honor. It needed only this experience, I felt, to make me a willing slave, to send me in haste to Ball & Black's to choose the finest, costlicst solitaire to be found in their brilliant collection.

I reached my home: I mounted the steps. There was a strange [silence about the premises. No cheerful bustle, no merry voices, no sound of footsteps, no ring of

I pulled the bell. Still completest silence; not even Jip's little chery yell warned or welcomed the solitary and disappointed went, breathless, chagrined, and mad. Up home-seeker. The parlor blinds were closthrough Cherry that confounded hat had seemed as if there must be a corpse in the had admired untold of times-she to de-

ily.

"Then I shall be oblight to arrest you for suspicious conduct," he responded preparing the way for action.

There was nothing for it but to submit to have his blue sleeve passed through my black one, and proceeded to the residence of the Judge to find out if I was-myself.

We had hardly passed to the sidewalk when fortunately, the judge himself came along.

"Hello, Haynes !" he cried, and then glanced at the figure at my side.

"I am to be arrested for breaking into my own house," I said returning his salutation. The policeman had suddenly dropped my arm, as if it burned him. The old judge who relished a joke, burst into a guffaw which brought the neighbors to their windows.

"By-the-way," said the judge when he had rocovered himself, "you had better keep your friend of the star in tow. My wife spoke to me about your housekeeper this morning ; said she went away in a carriage, and took more bundles than she brought when she came here."

My heart beat almost andibly. Could this gentle browed, low-voiced woman of whom I had thought in connection with a diamond engagement ring, be vile enough to deceive me, to despoil me? The supposition was too dreadful.

"I counsel you to attempt another raid," he added. "Perhaps Johnny here will give you a boost ;" and he laughed again. " It may all be the purest conjecture on

my wife's part you know. Ladies are apt to be suspicious of housekeepers. Ha ! ha! ha ! ha !'

Itmight be all a mistake! It was a mistake, I repeated, almost furiously to myself .-Mrs. George, that quiet moving, perfectly lady-like person ; Mrs. George, whose lightest step had sometemes set my pulses fluttering ; of whom I had dreamed I dare not say how often ; whose superb eyes, Oak street, down Green, across Maple, and ed, the basement shades were down; it swan-like throat, and stately presence I

"That is good," he said, his stolid face lighting up; "now we are prepared for them. It will make a pretty case. Suppose you suspect the housekeeper ?"

I had kept the contents of the letter to myself, merely giving him a hint or two, but I felt my blood boil at the mention of Mrs. George.

"Yes, of course I suspect the housekeeper. She turned off my old servants and brought two creatures of her own here. Nobody knows how much they have carried off."

"It's risky business," muttered the Star, with a shrewd glance. "Men ain't never safe with women-folks about, unless the ladies are in the firm, by Jove ! Rayther nice-looking?" and the fellow winked vulgarly.

"No, ugly as the deuce !" was my halfsavage reply. It would never cajoled by an artful interloper.

"Here's our game !" whispered the policeman, as a stylish carriage drove up to the door.

I looked down. The make up of the thief was complete. A casual acquaintance would have sworn it was me. The fellow sat gracefully back in the carriage, waited till the coachman opened the door, and stood there a moment on the sidewalk, looking carelessly round.

"Sure it's a perfect duplicate ; but he'll send the carriage off presently. It's expecting he'll be about for a time, and then a 'different kind of carriage'll be in wait-

Sure enough, the stylish equipage was driven off and the man with the very track of my own step, lounged coolly up to the door, the red lined cape of his coat jauntily displayed. Since that day I have discarded red lining.

The door opened, and the fellow went prowling over the lower rooms. In a very few moments he was joined by two other men, whom he let in by the back basement door

CONCLUDED ON SECOND PAGE.