

and by the time he reached the Run, it would be pitch dark; and he, all unaware of the condition of the bridge.

She shuddered, and started forward toward the trembling timbers that spanned the angry mass of foam, gleaming up so ghost-like through the fast gathering gloom. She must manage to cross the stream, or all was lost! She forgot everything but the urgent necessity she felt of warning Mr. Ashcroft; of saving him from destruction.

She stood still a moment on the edge of one of the black, slippery timbers, and looked down into the cauldron beneath.—Her head swam—she felt faint and dizzy.—By a strong effort, she forced herself to look up; there was safety only in ignoring danger. A single misstep would plunge her into eternity—no living thing could exist in that mad whirlpool below.

She stepped out boldly—the timber trembled beneath her weight, her feet seemed almost sliding from the slanting edge. She felt an irresistible impulse to look down, but she did not yield; she fixed her eyes resolutely on the opposite shore, and went steadily on.

She was safe. She sank down on a wet stone, oppressed with gratitude that she had been permitted to achieve success. She must wait for Mr. Ashcroft. How very long the time seemed, and yet it was not more than half an hour before she heard the sharp clink of his horse's hoofs on the rocks below. It was thick darkness now—one could hardly see a yard before him. She stepped into the middle of the path, her pale face shining ghostly white through the mist. Ashcroft was coming at a full gallop—he had nearly ridden her down, but his horse halted suddenly, and then he saw her.

"How! what have we here?" he called out.

"It is I, Mr. Ashcroft. The covering is gone from the bridge. You cannot cross to-night."

He was off his horse in a moment, and standing close by her side.

"You, Argeline Vernon?"

"Yes."

"And why did you come to tell me?"

"Why, indeed? his question recalled her to herself. She held by the trunk of a tree for support. She was overcome with shame. Had she indeed unsealed herself to this man, of all others? Pride helped her, though.

"I saw the condition of the bridge—I knew that you were expected to return by this road after dark, and I would make a great sacrifice to save a human life."

"How did you get across?"

"The stringers are left. I crossed on one of them."

He caught her convulsively to him.

"Argeline! Good heaven! and you ran all that fearful danger for my sake?"

She tried to get free, but he would not release her.

"Be quiet. I have borne your coldness and scorn patiently. Let me know what your love would be! I have loved you always—ever since that first day. What will you say to me?"

"I—I—thought it was Edith."

"Edith is but a child. She looks upon me as a father. It is you—only you—that I want, Argeline."

"But schoolmistresses are snuffy, and wear corkscrew ringlets, and are always just twenty-five."

"Ha! So now I have the clue! Argeline, I was an insolent coxcomb. Forgive me. Remember I had not seen you, then."

She forgave him, she said, softly—she had been foolishly sensitive about it—and further confession he stopped with his kisses.

Mr. Ashcroft took his horse back to the nearest farm-house, and arousing the men, he left Argeline there, and they returned to the bridge, where they built a large fire to warn others who might be travelling that way, of danger.

John Dragut came down to the ran to search for Argeline, was informed of her safety, and went home with the glad tidings. They had been very anxious at the farm-house.

The next day, the bridge was repaired, Mr. Ashcroft and Argeline walked home together, the horse following, meek and docile, behind. Four weeks afterwards, Ashcroft Hall had a mistress. The school was given into other hands, and Argeline took upon herself the duties of Eugene Ashcroft's wife. Duties of love, always.

When Edith was seventeen, she refused the hand of the young widower, Philip Desmond, who had just returned from Europe, and was smitten with the charms of the little beggar he had once struck with his whip. And he knew her identity, at the last. Afterward, she was married to Charles St. John, the nephew of Mr. Ashcroft, a graduate of West Point, and now a distinguished Federal officer.

"Where are you going?" said a young gentleman to an elderly one in a white cravat, whom he knew well, and overtook a few miles from Little Rock.

"I am going to heaven, my son. I have been on the way eighteen years."

"Well, good-by, old fellow; if you have travelled toward heaven eighteen years, and got no nearer to it than Arkansas, I'll take another route."

A little word, act or look, when the heart is sore, lingers as does the fragrance of the rose long after the vase is broken.

A Short Courtship.

I WAS a young man possessed of sufficient means to enable me to live at my ease, and refrain from labor of any kind, when suddenly there came a blow that scattered my prosperity to the winds, and forced me to employ my labor and wits in the general struggle of gaining a living. The blow came in the shape of the failure of a large firm in which my capital was invested.

After securing a clerkship in the house of a creditor of our late firm, my first care was to look up a less expensive boarding-house than the fashionable one in which I was living. I inserted an advertisement in several widely circulated city papers, asking for reasonable board in a strictly private family, and of course received a multitude of answers by next post. Out of this motley installment of epistles, there was but one which pleased me, and that one I decided to answer in person immediately.

Grace Kingsley was the name of the favored landlady writing to me, and the letter stated that her house was entirely private, having no boarders whatever. I was much pleased with the fair, delicate hand-writing, and an idea took possession of me that Grace was a young and fascinating widow. I was not disappointed when I reached the house, and my ringing at the door-bell was answered by the lady herself. She invited me into the parlor in a manner so courteous, and yet so modest, that I had fallen desperately in love with her before I could cross the threshold.

I enjoyed a very pleasant chat with Mrs. Kingsley. During the conversation she informed me that her late husband had been in a fair way of business, and at his death, which occurred a year previous, had left her in pretty comfortable circumstances. They had but one child; and this item of mortality I was graciously permitted to look upon, as it lay peacefully slumbering in its cradle. I also learned that the lady was living in the house quite alone, and desired a male boarder more as a means of protection than as a source of revenue. In conclusion, the landlady looked so pretty (she was quite young, not more than two or three and twenty) and the board so moderate, her companionship so inviting, and she seemed to trust in me, and look upon me so favorably that I would have been a heathen, dead to all charms and inducements of the sex, if I had not engaged board on the spot.

The next day I had my trunk removed to my new boarding place, and permanently established myself there. Before leaving my former boarding house, a letter was handed me by the postman, but I did not find time to examine it until I was comfortably ensconced in the parlor of Mrs. Kingsley's cosy house.

Opening the letter, I discovered it to be from a wealthy uncle, residing in Vermont, who regularly sent me a letter once a year; but whom I had never seen. His epistles were always short and to the point, generally consisting of an account of the weather in his locality, and some good advice to me to take care of my money, as I might be burdened with some of it before I was much older. I was always very glad to get this advice from him as I regarded it as an intimation that I was to inherit his wealth on his decease.

One day, however, about a year previous I received a letter from him which contained another topic besides those I have mentioned. My uncle made some pressing inquiries respecting my matrimonial prospects, and stated that if I was not already married I should immediately enter into the wedded state, and let him know of it, or he would never more be an uncle of mine.

Now, as my uncle lived in Vermont and I in Philadelphia, and I never anticipated the old gentleman would pay me a visit and discover the falsehood, I wrote and informed him that I was not only married, but the father of a bouncing baby. This intelligence so pleased my uncle that he sent a gold goblet and a silver pap spoon, to be presented to my child. I at first sat down and wrote a very romantic letter to my uncle, thanking him for the presents, and then visited the nearest jewelry store and turned both the goblet and spoon into cash, which I pocketed.

I had received no further letters from my uncle until the one which I read in Mrs. Kingsley's parlor. The postscript to this note only astonished, but absolutely frightened me. It read as follows:

P. S.—I have never visited Philadelphia, so I have decided to do so at once, and get a look at you and your wife and child. You may expect me about the 10th of the month.

"Good gracious! My uncle is coming to visit me," I exclaimed; "and its past the 10th of the month now! I don't know at what moment he may pop in. What am I to do for a wife and child?"

At that moment there came a terrible pull at the door bell as if the man who pulled it imagined that he owned the house and could make as much noise as he pleased. A sickening sensation took possession of me, for I had a misgiving that it was my uncle. Now as good fortune would have it, Mrs. Kingsley had gone out to a neigh-

boring store for a few moments, and had requested me to have an eye on her child while she was gone, so it wouldn't fall out of the cradle and hurt itself. As I glanced at the cradle, and thought of my uncle at the door, a bright idea entered my mind. I determined, in case the visitor was my uncle, to claim the youthful occupant as my own.

The visitor proved to be my uncle. I knew him by the pictures of him I had seen, and he likewise knew me by my photograph. After mutual recognition and hand-shaking, I ushered my honored relative into the parlor and introduced him to my newly claimed offspring.

"These, uncle," said I, "is the first pledge of our married life. I assure you I take pleasure in presenting to you my child."

"It is a fat little youngster," said my uncle, gazing at it admiringly. "By the way, what is it, boy or girl?"

That was a knotty story for me to answer, for he was just as much acquainted with its gender as I was. But it would not do to show ignorance on the subject, so I answered at haphazard that it was a boy.

"I am sorry it is a boy," said my uncle; "there are too many boys in the family. Now, if you had only produced a little blue eyed girl, it would have been more sensible."

I assured him I was sorry the gender did not suit, but hoped in the future his wishes would be gratified.

So far I had succeeded in deceiving my uncle, but the worst I feared was that when Mrs. Kingsley returned, she might object to my claiming ownership in her child.—Besides, to carry out my deception, I must find a wife as well as an infant, and Mrs. Kingsley was the only one I could conveniently claim. The only difficulty was to get her consent to the deception, and this might be done if I could only secure a private conversation with her before I introduced her to my uncle, then it would be all right.

I watched my opportunity, and gained an interview with her before she entered the room. I told her, in a few brief and hurried words the extent of my difficulty, and how I had taken the liberty of acting as papa to her little one. I then told her I must find a wife somewhere, and begged her to allow me to introduce her in that capacity. She laughed very heartily at the suggestion, said she could comprehend my difficulty, and consented to my proposal, and very roguishly warned me not to presume upon the occurrence.

We then entered the parlor and I introduced her as my better half. My uncle was very much pleased with her, and complimented me upon my good choice in the selection of a wife. Mrs. Kingsley, of course, colored most charmingly at this compliment, and I could plainly see that she could scarcely refrain from laughing.

"You have a fine boy here," said my uncle to Mrs. Kingsley, pointing to the cradle.

"Excuse me, sir," said she, coloring up again, "it's a girl."

I was dumb founded. I was exposed in my iniquity. Would my uncle believe me after this? He looked from me to my pretty landlady with a puzzled countenance.

"Your husband told me it was a boy, he said, and rather suspiciously too, I thought."

"Well, I always took it for a boy," was my reply, putting on a bold face, "but I suppose my wife knows best."

Here Mrs. Kingsley fairly screamed with laughter, and my uncle's stern face assumed an ironical smile.

"You are a nice father, ain't you?" he said touching me with the point of his umbrella, "not to know the sex of your own child. Why, I knew it was a girl the moment I looked at it."

But, Charley," he said, again addressing me, "what did you do with the goblet and pap spoon I sent to the little one?"

"Oh, they are perfectly safe, I assure you," I replied. "I have taken good care of them."

"Yes, but where in the deuce are they? I would like very much to take another look at them."

"Well, I have deposited them in a bank for safe keeping, but I can readily produce them—that is—in the course of a week's time."

He told me to do so, as he wanted to see them, and then I got out of the room, for fear that he might ask me some more perplexing questions.

A short time afterward, Mrs. Kingsley came to me, when I was alone, in an adjoining room and I saw immediately that something very humorous must have happened, for the corners of her lips were breaking into smiles.

"Do you know, sir, into what an awkward predicament you have got me?" she inquired, as she took a seat on the lounge by my side.

"Explain yourself," I said.

"Why, your uncle came to me a short time ago, and asked to see my marriage certificate, and he said he had some money to settle upon us immediately, but wanted to be sure that everything was right first."

"Did you expose me?" I inquired anxiously.

"No, sir, I did not, for I never enter

into a deception, or anything else, by halves."

I was so elated that I could not withstand the temptation of embracing her. This did not make her angry, for she nestled her head cozily on my shoulder and smiled serenely.

"What answer did you make him?" I asked.

She hesitated for a moment and then said: "I promised to produce the marriage certificate."

"But we haven't got any," I then remarked.

She indulged in a quiet little laugh to herself, but said nothing.

"Mrs. Kingsley—nay, my dear madam—no, I will call you darling—we are both in a scrape, and there is but one way for us to get out of it. We must go and get married immediately. Will you be my wife?"

"I shall be delighted," she answered, frankly, and seizing both my hands, said that she was ready for a frolic of any kind.

We lost no time I assure you. I don't think Mrs. Kingsley ever got into her Sunday clothes in such a hurry in her life before, while I spoiled two pairs of suspenders in my frantic endeavors to be on time. We quite astonished the parson by our haste, and at the conclusion of the ceremony, I would have forgotten to give him the usual "fee," if he had not reminded me of it.

We had secured the coveted marriage certificate, signed and sealed, and were now safely out of our difficulties, as we thought. We had omitted one precaution, as we presented the certificate to uncle. It was all right with the exception of the modern date.

"Why, how is this?" said my uncle, gazing at the document through his specs; "I thought you were married over a year ago."

"So we were, uncle," I answered very solemnly.

"How comes it, then, that the certificate is dated to-day?" he asked in a voice of thunder.

We were struck speechless, both my wife and I.

"Come," said my uncle, "I see there has been some trickery here. Own up to it, or I will never forgive you."

I did own up to it, and told him the whole story. I expected it would make him angry, but it didn't; for he laughed heartily, and said I was a clever rascal, and he was proud of me.

"But how about the gold goblet and pap-spoon? You haven't been drawing the wool over my eyes about them, too, have you—eh?"

"I told the truth about the goblet and pap-spoon."

"Why, you are a regular trickster," said my uncle. "I believe you would deceive Satan himself. But I won't get angry with you, for I used to play the same games when I was young."

In a word, we became thoroughly reconciled, and my uncle settled upon me a sufficient income to enable me to quit my irksome duties as a clerk. He has gone back to Vermont, and I can but say in conclusion, that when he pays us another visit, I can show several "little people" that I call my own, and without telling a falsehood.

An Ingenious Convict.

The convict Smith, who recently escaped from his cell in Sing Sing Prison, made use of a most ingenious device for unlocking his cell-door. It consisted of a bar of wood, about eighteen inches long, from the end of which another bar reached down at right angles, about four inches in length. In the lower end of this shorter bar a receptacle was hollowed out for the purpose of holding a cunningly-contrived false key, and on the lower bar was arranged a twisted leather belt, passing over upright pins, and worked by a crank so nicely adjusted that by turning the crank the key would also be turned at the other extremity of the bar. Having made these arrangements he quietly awaited an occasion when the regular keeper was absent and a relief keeper locked up the cells on his gallery. This keeper having convinced himself that Smith was in his cell, passed on to the other end of the corridor, and the most plausible theory is that while he was thus engaged Smith thrust the machine through the bars of the square grating above the lock, dropping it till the false key fitted in the keyhole, and then turning the crank, unlocked his door (throwing the bar and crank on his bed, where it was afterwards found) and quietly walked out past the keepers at the north end of the corridor. The oldest keepers at the prison are completely baffled by the brilliancy of this exploit, and assert that no such elaborate method of escape has ever been devised by any other prisoner. As nobody actually saw him pass beyond the confines of the prison, there is still a doubt existing as to whether he is "stowed away" within the walls or enjoying his coveted freedom in the world at large.

What is the difference between a murderous attack and pig-killing? One is assault with intent to kill, and the other is a kill with intent to salt.

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