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Poet's Corner.

For the Democrat.

My Sister.

I sit alone, dear Lizzie
Beside our window seat,
And listen to the trampling
Of busy little feet;
Our petted household tressures
With footsteps clad in light,
Can never guess the wretchedness
That fills my heart to night.
For though your bounding footfalls
Glads not their golden hours,
They do not always miss you
In this *sad home of ours.*
The queen of rosy spring time
Along our path has sped.
A wreath of silver fragrance
Around her regal head,
The gushing songs of May-Birds
Are wafted gaily up
And blossom spirits glisten
In every floral cup.
Ah me, they all seem mocking
This dull, cold, heavy pain,
My burdened heart can never
Be light and glad again,
We know that you, are near us
For sometimes in their play,
The children stop to listen
Your old, familiar lay;
And when we pause in wonder
The angel notes to hear,
We half forget sweet Lizzie,
The coffin and the bier;
But then the bitter working
To find the vision fled,
And all these sad mementoes
To tell us *you are dead!*
Oh, sister, will you never
Come at my slighted call,
To watch with me the trumpet-flower
Creep up the garden wall?
Ah strange that one so fond of earth
So soon from life must part,
It almost steals the faith from out,
My wildly-beating heart,
Say darling, will you know us
Amid the Heavenly throng
And teach us how to warble
The *angels sweetest song?*
The world is far too beautiful
For one so young to die;
Great God, forgive my anguish,
And check each rising sigh,
Sweet bird of mortal promise,
Your sky of life was fair,
And this consuming sorrow
Seems more than we can bear.
Oh Father, teach us meekly
To kiss the chastening hand,
And clasp us in thy kingdom
A gathered ransomed band.

EAST HILL, Harford.

☞ The young lady so excessively cross-eyed that one of her glances produces indigestion, has been hired by the proprietor of a cheap boarding house to stand at the front door and gaze at his customers as they come to dinner.

☞ One of the heaviest things to lie on the human mind, is a late supper of cold potatoes. A murder don't begin with it.

☞ Ten friends are dearly purchased at the expense of a single enemy; for the latter will take ten times more pains to injure you than the former will take to render you a service.

☞ Some ladies will forgive silliness; but none ill-manners. And there are but few capable of judging of your learning and genius; but all of your behaviour.

☞ The man who minds his own business has got a good steady employment.

☞ 'You quarrel with your wife, my friend; and why? Do you not think and wish alike?'

'God knows we do,' said poor Caudle, 'each of us wants to be master.'

☞ The best proof we have seen of the *cowardice* attributed to Gen. Pierce by the whigs, is the way he ran at the recent election.

☞ A punster says, 'My name is Somerset. I am a miserable bachelor. I cannot marry; for how could I hope to prevail on any young lady possessed of the slightest notion of delicacy, to turn a somerset.'

☞ There are some women whom God does not seem to have intended for wives and mothers—who have no conception of what a home should be and no desire to realize it, if they had.

☞ Three men agree to build a stone wall. Two can't work, and the other won't. Wanted to know when they will get it done, and how much they will make by it, provided lime goes up in the meantime, a foot, a foot and a half, or two feet?

☞ The man who attempted to make a fence out of beef *stakes*, has just obtained a patent for a machine to take the kinks out of pig's tails. He voted the tig wicket at the late election, and is a prominent member of the Lazy Club.

☞ John Philip Kemble requested that the age of his father might be inscribed upon the tombstone. 'Long life,' said he, 'implies virtuous habits, and they are real honors.'

From the New York Organ.

The Creole Wife,

A Romance of the West.

BY MRS. M. A. DENISON.

CONTINUED.

Rosa was calm the moment she heard the heart-rending shrieks of her unfortunate sister. She begged and implored to be taken away; and although the physician feared that her removal might be attended with serious consequences, he yielded to her solicitations, dreading the setting in of fever.

'Will she recover?' asked the chancellor.

'With great care,' was the solemn reply, 'but I fear she will keep her chamber for months, perhaps her bed.'

'Only so her life is spared, I care not for that—except, poor creature, it will be so tedious for her.'

'Truly,' thought the physician, who saw a golded harvest in prospect, 'the storm that devastates one region, fertilises another. These rich foreigners, sad as their advent has proved to the poor Judge, will make my fortune, perhaps.'

'An ugly sight—I tell you, an ugly sight,' muttered a little ill-favored fellow, who stood with a knot of laborers at the door of a tavern.

'You see the spiteful beast couldn't take a straight run, but went for all the world like a drunken man; so you see that gave her two or three extra bruises. It wan't a sight to make a pictor of, though the girl is the beautifullest woman I ever laid eyes on.'

'Ay! that she is, I never saw anything like it, but if she ain't got one fiery temper too, I'll never guess again. Mighty! how her eyes flashed—sparks and kindlin's wouldn't 'a been nothing to 'em—when the animal began to go, she looked a tiger. That heap of shingles Deacon Graff left near the house, skeered the creature. I said last night, says I, deacon, I reckon them things'll do mischief, sartain; but he is tight you know, wouldn't hear—and couldn't fix 'em himself till morning. But, mighty! she'd 'a sot him thro', right straight out to the end of the tramp, I reckon, plungs as he mought, if the girth hadn't broken.'

'Well, what's your opinion of the queer doings now?' asked one of the company, taking from his mouth the last remnant of a segar; 'Stanton's a pretty well used up man ain't he?'

'Do they say this Indian girl is his daughter?' asked another.

'Yes, *they say* every thing; they say he's to be tried for bigamy; and *I say*, he's a precious rascal. Ah! well these big folks get found out in their pranks as well as the small fry, that's one consolation. Here we have been setting him up for a perfect specimen of a man, a pattern of a gentleman, and he turns out to be a—a—gentleman in horns.'

'That daughter of his—I am sorry for her.'

'Well you may be; the young lawyer you see has deserted her already.'

'No; you don't though.'

'True as gospel; he hasn't been here since the scrape began.'

'How do you know that he has left her, for all that?'

'O! the housekeeper is my first cousin, recollect,' answered the man winking.

'They say that the Judge has been married as many as six or seven times,' chimed in one who had heretofore been a listener.

'Don't doubt it,' said a half dozen voices at once.

'And some think he wasn't any too good to put 'em out of the way, when he was tired of 'em.'

'Horrible!'

'Enough to make old Locke's bones shake in the coffin, and rattle out of his grave.'

'True—now if any of us had done such things, I'd like to know what merry'd been showed us!'

'Twould be too good to ride him on a rail,' muttered another, with a wrathful shake of the head.

Rosa, covered with bruises from head to foot, was for a long while in a situation of danger.

By degrees poor Grace came out of her lethargy, but alas! not to reason. That dread, dark name of disgrace was stamped upon her brain. She imagined that Rosa stood constantly near her, pointing the finger of contempt, and forever muttering that cruel word. As she gained her strength, she became more than ever anxious for solitude. Often would she be missed from her familiar places; invariably she was found crouched in the darkest nooks, endeavoring to hide herself from the being who pursued her. She was perfectly harmless; she would still curl and arrange her soft, smooth tresses with the precision usual with her, and arrange them with as much taste as ever, yet she constantly asserted that there was a coal of fire upon her head.

She would take her books from day to day, with her accustomed work, and engage in reading or sewing for a few moments, then wander restlessly about. She seemed fond of reading over the old letters of her lover, but she would sometimes say, 'He loves me no longer—I am not fit for him now,' as she finished perusing them; at others she would implore him not to desert her, assuring him that he knew not, he could not know the depth of her love for him.

It was a touching sight.

Her father hoped that Horace would never return, it would be as well he thought; Grace could not, of course, become his wife now, even if he were willing to marry her. He did not give her the young man's letters, he answered them cautiously, telling him that Grace was indisposed.

Their retreat, for they were now in their new home, was very beautiful. A little house situated on a slight declivity, near a tract of rich woodland, approached as yet only by a foot path. Around the dwelling stood tall trees, in summer covered with glorious foliage, to the right, and far in the soft distance, a wild rocky mountain, bare, yet fantastic in outline, threw its shaggy summit against the sky, and on every hand were the sweetest rural spots; it was a very paradise in beauty.

Busy in arranging the furniture, Grace at times partially forgot her grief; and it was not till the hurry and bustle of moving were over, and comparative quiet and order reigned, that the old vision returned; though not accompanied with such sad effects as formerly.

Often her father would walk with her into the old gray woods, or mounting their horses, they would ride away for miles together.—Every moment the erring father devoted to his child, and surely if works could expiate for sin, such devotion went not unrewarded.

One morning Judge Stanton had occasion to visit the town; he set out in unusually good spirits. He had been reviewing his life all over, as he often did of late, but this time his thoughts took a more cheerful turn.

'Surely,' he thought, 'I have drained the cup of affliction to its very dregs; the consequences of my sin must now be arrested. My blessed child is not wholly unhappy, her lunacy is harmless, and at times she seems like her dear self again; and more—blessed be God—I am not living in sin.'

Thus he reasoned, trusting he had some slight hopes of happiness again.

Entering the town by the most remote thoroughfares, he concluded his purchases, learned that his imperious child was slowly gaining strength, heard the news, and set out on his return quite near evening.

At the Post Office there was a letter from Horace. He broke the seal eagerly, and read it slowly. It abounded in tenderness, and tears filled his eyes as he came to the following:

'I have learned all, Grace; learned it with great sorrow, for your sake. Let me tell you dearest, and do not doubt me, that I never loved you so well as now; that this news makes not the least alteration in my feelings. Dear, blessed Grace, I long to be near you so much the more; and shield you by the sacred tie of wife from the cruel and the thoughtless. As your husband then, let me the sooner have the right to protect you; I shall fold you to my bosom on my return with fourfold of the love with which I first beheld you.'

The judge could read no farther; oh, how utterly wretched, how guilty did he feel himself then.

'Noble fellow,' he exclaimed,' generous Horace—what shall I say to you! how break the sad intelligence? Alas! he will return to find her broken hearted—he will return to curse me. Miserable being that I am—why, why do I live to blight every beautiful thing that crosses my path?'

When he had gained sufficient composure, he resumed the letter. Horace was meditating a return the following month.

His father's affairs were all settled, and an uncle recently deceased, had left him a small fortune, most of which he should settle upon his mothers and sisters; the rest would suffice him, with what his profession might afford him.

He ended with assuring Grace that his love was unalterable.

Slowly the wretched father journeyed homewards; not a word had been said about him; he was filled with forebodings of gloom. He sighed as he passed the quiet grave-yard, its ghostly head stones so pale in the moonlight. He wished that he too, and Grace, laid beside the gentle wife and mother.

His thoughts were not calm and holy as suited the scene before him.

Masses of silver-white light laid upon the broad fields, and touched the brows of the swelling hills, and brightened up the uneven sides of the misty hollows, but the serene beauty of the quiet landscape had little charm for him.

Slowly, yet more slowly, he neared his home. He dreaded to see Grace; to hear her sweet tones, he felt, would at present be torture. He could scarcely summon courage to step on the threshold—he knew not why.—The door stood ajar, and he entered silently. How lonely it seemed! and there sat Nurse Leland, in the little parlor,—her eyes red, her face flushed, her whole manner disturbed.

The judge glanced carelessly towards her at first, but halt perceiving something unusual in her appearance he turned and gazed with a closer scrutiny, at which she began to weep.

'What is the matter?' he asked in alarm, looking round for Grace.

'Don't ask me, sir. Miss Grace——'

'What of her?' he shouted, transfixed to the floor.

'She has not come back.'

'What do you mean, woman! in Heaven's name, what do you mean?' he ejaculated, breathing hard and turning to leave the room.

'Alas! sir, I know not,' replied the nurse, rising and following him to the door. 'Just after you were gone, she went out for a walk, as she usually does. I watched for her at dinner; she did not come; nor at supper.—God preserve the poor dear darling!'

'What more?' exclaimed Herman, hoarsely, gazing warily around, and listening in the hush of the still evening. 'Where is my child? where can my poor child wander at this hour?'

'I have been asking that question all day.—Little Jaques has been gone since the noon, and I don't know but he has got lost too.'

'Which way did she go?' groaned rather than spoke the wretched father.

'When I last saw her she was some distance up the hilly road to the right there; but you know, sir, that ends in the woods. Whether she continued on, or came back and struck off in another path I can't tell.'

'Hark!' exclaimed Herman, shrilly, his heart leaping, 'Who is there?'

'It is I, sir,' said the little French Jaques, who was a sort of errand boy in the family.

'Then you have not found her.'

'No, sare; I no find anyting.'

'O! pity me!' he groaned; then turning to the nurse, said, 'There is an old lantern in the house somewhere.

'Yes, among the rubbish in the spare room. I will get it.'

'Hurry, then; every moment is precious.—Jaques,' he added, turning to the boy, 'go up stairs and get my hunting belt. I must carry weapons with me. Bring down my double-barrelled gun; that you can shoulder Quick, boy.'

The lad's black eyes flashed with pleasure at the smallest prospect of an adventure; he ran briskly on his mission and soon returned with the gun.

Everything was in readiness,—the gun loaded, the lantern trimmed, and lighted, in the boy's hand.

'Are you afraid to stay alone?' asked the judge, turning to the nurse.

'Bless you, no,' she resolutely replied. 'Only find our poor darling. Leave me; I am not afraid.'

'You may have my beads to tell,' said the little fellow, who was a Catholic; and he lifted them from his neck.

'Keep your beads; I have something better than beads to sustain me,' she replied.

Crazed with a thousand fears, the bewildered father hurried from home, scarce conscious where, with not the remotest idea of which path his child had taken. He toiled up the steep rock-road which the nurse had pointed out, and struck into the woods, moving with a hurried yet bewildered air, and constantly muttering to himself, 'If she is here, I will find her.'

Cautiously he ventured along the untried path, peering through the underbrush, calling loudly and repeatedly upon the name of his child.

Morn came smiling over the mountains, and the father, worn out and dispirited, sat cheerlessly down. No child yet! The dark woods had echoed and re-echoed with his passionate calls; his strength was failing him, not so much with the exertion of walking as through the departure of that false energy which the will spiritual, not the strength bodily, had given him.

After one more hopeless search he returned to the house, and found the nurse, although it was late in the morning, asleep on the sofa, wearied with watching and weeping. Grace had not returned, and the poor father, without allowing himself a morsel of food, mounted his horse and galloped back into town.

There he called at every place where his child had been in the habit of visiting; but none had seen or heard tidings of the missing one.

The news flew rapidly: Judge Stanton had lost his child; she had wandered away—perhaps been taken by the Indians, large bands of whom were or had been in the vicinity. Many a father sympathised with him, obnoxious as his name had become; and forthwith a party was hurriedly formed to scour the surrounding country and find her, if possible, dead or alive. Many hoped the latter, and not uncharitably so; they felt life would be to her one long and heavy burden; and the gentle creature was beloved by all who had known her, as much as her father was execrated and censured.

She could not have travelled far in the course of a single day nor night, they suggested, so they determined to make the circuit of twenty miles, searching as thoroughly as they might be able, every place to which a human being could have access.

They met with no success that day. The next they came to a little group of huts inhabited by a few poor emigrants, who spoke a barbarous mixture of French and English.—One woman contrived to make them understand that a pretty creature had called there the morning before, and had asked for water, and she had given her some dinner. Her clothes she said, were torn, but very nice. Pretty young lady—hair very bright and curly—hat very 'shontee,' which was her English for genteel.

'What way did she go?' asked Herman with renewed hope.

She did not know; she was too busy to look but she called one of the half-grown boys, and asked him. He pointed in the direction they had come, saying she had passed the long belt of woods that stretched to the east of them, but had returned again and struck into their depths.

Herman breathed more freely; it seemed to him as if she were even then near; there was no danger to apprehend for her, except from the wolves, and they had so long been driven back by the settlers that it was hardly probable they infested these small forests very numerously.

The atmosphere was unusually soft and bright, the sky clear and shining, the air warm and balmy, loaded with the fragrance of spring flowers. The judge therefore felt a sort of faith that he should be again restored to Grace. He felt as if God would protect her. Through suffering, his reliance on the mighty One was strengthened.

Leaving their steeds at the outskirts of the wood, with two chosen guards, the party entered its gloomy precincts, and diverging from each other, performed the circuits in parties of two. The wood was scarcely half a mile in extent; the ground, dry and firmy, crackled with the yet unbound frost; for in those dim solitudes, where the heavy and intertwined branches formed a lesser dome overhead, the warm rays of the sun could but slowly penetrate.

For hours, and with unflagging spirits, they sought in the 'dim old aisles' for the gentle fugitive. Every man felt a deep interest in the issue of the enterprise; but they met again towards night, still unsuccessful.

Then it was the almost heart-broken father, giving way to his keen anguish, sank down by the roadside and wept.

'What have I to live for,' he exclaimed 'if my child has deserted me? Heaven pity a parent's grief! Would I too might die?'

'Oh, Stanton, cheer up, cheer up,' said an old friend, pitying his distress; 'we have not abandoned her yet; we shall find her yet depend upon it. She has probably, with the cunning peculiar to her situation, hidden herself. She travels, perhaps at night. We will try again; this time by the light of the moon and our lanterns. Cheer up.'

'I have no doubt,' chimed in another, anxious to bestow his mite of consolation, 'but that she is somewhere in the vicinity, or even nearer home than we expect. Let us wait till the moon is up, and go at it again.'

'Till the moon is up!' echoed one of the party; 'why, man, she doesn't show the rim of her breastplate till nigh twelve. We are fatigued, to be sure, and it's my opinion that we ought to keep on towards home, searching by the way. We have now been gone nearly three days, and we should give some account of ourselves, or the wives and little ones will begin to feel alarmed. I tell you she's nigher home than this. I've had to do with mad people before now,' he continued, thoughtlessly,—'the poor father shuddered;—'and I know what freaks they take; they are as cunning as wild cats. Now, I'll be bound she's not three miles from her own home.'

'And how far are we from there now?'

'Twelve or fourteen miles, I should judge.'

'Well, we had better go back and get more aid; our horses are jaded out and we are all in need of rest. By morning we could organiso a fresh party, and set them on the track.—We shall find her yet, if Providence pleases; we must put our trust in Providence.'

'That is it,' said another, addressing the father, 'and your child is in the hands of a Good Being; innocents and crazy folks are always guided by Him.'

Though homely, this little consolation was grateful to the bereaved parent; his soul felt a new trust and hopefulness that he had hitherto not known; he prayed earnestly, humbly, sincerely, that the Almighty would direct him to the dear wanderer.

Some hours after, by two and two, the party set out upon their homeward course. Herman laboring as he was, under intense excitement dashed on far ahead of the rest; but one of the company kept pace with him—old Squire Gruff, as he was commonly called, an honest man, with a warm impulsive heart, somewhat censorious, but quick both to forgive and forget. He had been loudest in his denunciations of the judge, yet first to propose and plan the search.

Within a few miles of home, when the moon was hourly waning, the poor horses whose strength had been taxed to the utmost, began to show signs of fatigue. They paused for a moment to give the panting animals rest. A narrow gorge between two hills seemed to open a new path, at least it had evidently been travelled, for the grass was beaten down, and a few feet from the entrance some pure white flowers laid withered upon the ground.

'Squire,' exclaimed Herman, pointing towards them, 'there is something providential in this; we must strike off here, we can walk our horses—Squire! Grace has been here—I know it; I feel it; I am confident the child has been here too day.'

For a few moments they progressed easily, but soon the horses began stumbling among the loose stones that the squire had rightly judged would impede their way.

'We are losing the path.'

'Never mind,' said Stanton, hurriedly, urging the horse still harder, 'I have a presentiment that Grace is here, something draws me onward.'

In another moment the horses were champing the turfs of soft green grass that grew scantily around them, and the father, nerved to new energy, followed by the kind hearted squire, hurried along the narrow rock-margined path.

'This is terrible—terrible,' muttered the father in hollow tones, 'oh! Grace, child of my love, blessed darling, where are you?—Squire,' he exclaimed, in a startling tone, 'it is now—oh, the thought, nearly three days ago; she has perished—starved may be—starved, and a frantic light gleamed from his wild eyes.

'Don't give up so,' said the Squire, as Herman, tremblingly violently, leaned against the ledge for support, but even as he spoke, the latter uttered a sharp, quick shout, and bounding a few paces forward, caught the fragments of a veil—a green veil, such as Grace always wore.

'I told you, sir,' he shouted, almost overcome with joy, holding the shred before his eyes, then pressing it tightly within his hands, 'I knew God would not forsake a despairing father—he could not in my agony. Courage! you have a father's heart; think how mine must bleed for that unfortunate child; onward, onward!—or go back if you will, I must continue to search.'

Both kept in the vicinity of the rocks almost certain that every dark hollow concealed the form of the lost one. The father's heart beat alternately with hope and apprehension. Should he find her living—or mangled and dead! The mere supposition of the latter was madness, yet a humble trust in the guiding care of the Creator nerved him to go forward.

Hark! what voice broke the stillness of that almost desert place, sending the blood like lightning through his heart—'Found! found! found!' and the bleak rocks seemed to take voice, and re-echo till they rang again—'Found! found! found!'

Springing in the direction of the shouts, dashing wildly forward and onward, he met the old squire, panting with exertion, the perspiration streaming over his ruddy face.

'Well, Judge,' he articulated, eagerly, 'I reckon a good sized fortune wouldn't make me gladder than I am just now. Why, bless the good Lord! the girl is safe and sound, and sleeping quiet as an infant in its mother's arms.'

Herman was almost overcome at this announcement; he grasped the squire's arms, and was rather led along than otherwise. His soul just then was a temple of thanksgiving.

'I found a little out of the way opening, which, when I held my lantern in, seemed something of a place beyond. Then, as I stood there, you see, I kind of fancied I heard a breathing. I tell you, it gave me a strange feeling, chill and awful like. Actually I felt the hair rise on my temples; but, thinks I, it's something mortal at anyrate, and trusting in the good Lord, I'll go in. So in I went; and there was your daughter, sleeping as prettily as if on a bed of down. Here we are;—yes, the lantern burns yet. Make no noise;—people in that state are easily disturbed.'

In truth the fair girl looked charmingly.—She lay upon the ground, her white arms flung above her head, the united palms just touching her fair temples, a troubled smile upon the features, her bosom softly heaving as if she were enjoying healthful repose.

The little cave which she found in her rambles had apparently been visited more than once, for her wearing apparel was scattered around, her work-box and basket stood upon a projection of rock, a little looking-glass hung against the natural wall, and upon a narrow ledge lay combs and brushes, with various little appurtenances belonging to the toilet. A clasp-knife and the small remains of a loaf of bread, which she had probably taken from home, lay near her, and early wild flowers, formed into wreaths, were looped up here and there, as her fantasy had directed her taste.

It was evident that her slumber was refreshing. The distance she must have travelled to and from the little French settlement had fatigued her.

With how thankful a heart the overjoyed father knelt beside the restored one, while the squire, with moistened eyes, stood near.

'Grace,' whispered the judge, in a low, soft tone.

There was no manifestation of consciousness.

'Grace,' he said, louder and repeatedly.

The sweet slumber stirred not a jot.

'How shall I get her home?' he exclaimed. 'If we could only convey her there as she sleeps.'

'It would be next to an impossibility, over these rocks. You might try, however. We have strong arms—at least I have;—you look wearied out. Let me take her. She is light, poor thing,' and he lifted the insensible form. 'Do you go forward and pilot me. We have still moon enough to find the way.'

Grace was thus conveyed home—her heavy slumber unbroken—and laid within her own little room.

Everybody, far and near, rejoiced when the news spread; for who did not love Grace?

When she awoke in the morning, her father sat beside her, gazing with mournful earnestness in her face. For an instant she glanced around, bewildered, then springing up, she said, 'I am not at home; carry me to my home.'

'Grace,' said her father, restraining her, 'you would not leave me, love; do you not see this is your own little chamber? look, from the window see the hill you love so well, here are your pictures, your books—this is your home, my child.'

'No, no; I tell you no; it is not my home—oh, let me go quick; Horace will be here; he will see me,' and she covered her face with her hands, again attempting to leave her couch.

'Grace, have you forgotten me?' asked her father, mournfully.

His tender tones seemed to recall her reason; with a deep drawn sigh she gazed for a moment steadfastly upon him, and with a most thrilling manner said,—'No, father, though all the world forsake you, I will not,' but it was as the fitful blaze of the expiring candle, her thoughts almost instantly following in the track of her disordered imagination.

'I cannot see him,' she exclaimed, resolutely, 'and when I go home—reverting to the cave—you must not tell him where I am. O! this is a great sacrifice—I love him; I love Horace, father—but then—it will be better for me to live alone—I must be alone—for you see, father, my brain burns constantly—and besides, she haunts me here, she continued, her finger pointed at vacancy. 'Why do you let the sun shine upon me? there is already a fire within my brain and within my bosom—what do I want of the sun?'

Then she sank again into that lethargic slumber that was evidently becoming habitual to her.

It was a long while before she awoke; she seemed more rational and did not once advert to her journey or the circumstances of her return.

Herman was constantly by her side, but despite his watchfulness she escaped again, and was found in the same place, composedly reading, and to all appearances, as perfectly happy in her dreary solitude as she could be. So a few household goods were transferred to the little cave, a door constructed, and the dismal place soon presented the appearance of a well arranged room.

Every day the father journeyed to and fro intent only on administering to the caprices of the poor demented one.

CHAPTER VIII.

'In all misfortunes, this advantage lies,
They make us humble and they make us wise.'

Horace's Return—The Terrible Surprise—Lovers Meeting—Self-will—The Appeal

Horace had heard nothing of this last great affliction. That Grace was dishonored in the eyes of a censorious world, he was aware; but his love was to holy a principle to be thrown aside lightly; not once did he dream of deserting her; he viewed the crime of the father with abhorrence, and shrank from the thought of allying his interest with him, but that she the innocent, child-like, pure creature was to blame in any degree, the thought was sacrilege; he felt that she had greater claim to his love, his protection, than before. He had for a long time received no letters, and he feared her too sensitive spirit shrank from confiding in him as formerly, now that she falsely imagined her situation debarred her from connecting with the unstained.

Alas! how little he dreamed of the sad reality.

Leaving his mother and sister comfortably situated, he set out upon his journey, and in due time arrived at the town of L——.

Greatly surprised at the removal of the judge and not caring to interpret the peculiar glances which he felt rather than saw, indicated that something was wrong, he turned his horse's head in the direction pointed out him, and eager to behold Grace, hurried into the little house almost without warning.

Judge Stanton was reading—a habit usual with him of mornings, but after a wild, transfixed gaze, as if to assure himself that this presence was real, he sprang from his seat, a glad smile irradiated his countenance, yet he still hesitating as he held out his hand.

Horace, in whose heart the old filial feeling pleaded in favor of that world-weary man so penitent, so suffering, held forth his hands, and with a warm grasp shook his patron's hand with real cordiality.

'I should not have recognized you,' he exclaimed, gazing curiously, first at Herman, then around the meagerly furnished room.

'I wonder not,' answered the Judge sighing; 'I doubted much whether I should ever meet you again.'

An awkward silence ensued. There was a weary, uncomfortable feeling hanging like a weight upon the usually light spirits of the young man; Grace was on his tongue, in his every thought, and that unaccountable presentiment kept him from mentioning her name; and still he looked for her momently to glide through the little door.

'O! Mr. Horace—dear Mr. Horace, did you rain down from the sky?' exclaimed Madam Leland, hurrying into the room and grasping his hand, 'alas, alas;' she uttered in a more mournful tone, while her eyes filled with tears.

'What does she mean?' asked the young man, with a gesture of alarm, rising nervously from his seat, and confronting the judge.

'Have you not heard, then?' asked the latter, leaning heavily forward. 'You have.—Why should I ask?—You know of the misfortune that has befallen our dear girl.'

'Certainly I do; but what, of that?' asked the young man, his voice growing cheerful.—'Do I not assure you by my presence that I regard it as no obstacle to our union?'

'Not that—not that,' groaned the wretched man, waving one hand and bowing his forehead upon the other—'not that; would it were nothing more!'

The nurse sobbed violently.

'What do you mean?' asked Horace, in a low, feezing tone, as if schooling his heart to bear the worst. 'Tell me, oh! my father! can she be dead?'

'Worse—worse!' groaned the judge, opening his palms and closing them convulsively. 'O! I could have laid her beside her sainted mother with pleasure, rather than this. Grace is no longer the Grace of other days; that beautiful mind is in ruins.'

'In other words,' added Horace, with fearful calmness, 'Grace is crazy—a maniac;' a sudden pain shot through them. 'My cup of sorrow is full,' he groaned with heartfelt