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## The Husband's a Happy New Year.

Bright and fresh, if a little too frosty  
For scent we wear after the hair—  
The morning is splendidly bracing,  
The country delightful, though bare.  
The sky is a turquoise in color,  
The sun, while it dazzles the eyes,  
Warns the skaters, but six solid inches  
The ice on the brook-water lies;  
The wood in the distance is purple,  
With hardly a leaf, green or sere;  
It is surely a day of good omen  
That brings in a Happy New Year.

What, darling, astir, and so early?  
Your face, both young and within mine;  
Your eyes as fresh as the morning,  
Your eyes with its happiness shine;  
The sun turns your hair to its color;  
There's nothing in Nature so bright;  
Forgive if my words seem to flatter,  
They only express my delight.  
My heart like a bubble is floating,  
So buoyant, and yet so sincere,  
As, with all its intense devotion,  
I wish you a Happy New Year!

All that happiness means I desire you,  
All that Heaven bestows on its own,  
May it be without bounds, or its limits  
Be set by your wishes alone;  
Life is a checkered, but then the pure metal  
Is lighter than, you know, by alloy,  
And life sometimes gives by its sorrow  
The zest that we find in its joy.  
But there, I'm growing didactic  
And wrongly detaining you here,  
Hand in hand, while I only intended  
To wish you a Happy New Year!

## Three Remarkable Christmas Days.

CHRISTMAS DAY IN THE TIGRIS.

I had been for some time residing at Bagdad, in 1833. Curiosity to visit a city rendered so famous by the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments" led me from India first to visit Bassora, the Balsorah of the Thousand and One Nights, and then the city of the Caliph, whose fame has supplied the title to a pretty opera now rarely performed. And when I had supplied sufficiently full of all the attractions of the quaint old city, which had not then been wholly ruined, in dark-blue velvet and the scarlet fez, I made preparations for a journey across the desert to Damascus, for the Holy Land was the ultimate object of my travels. To effect this in safety, it was necessary to don the garment of an Arab to allow the beard a few weeks' growth, and to study the phrases which would be requisite to help me on my perilous journey. My previous residence in India facilitated the acquisition of the accent, and I could soon pronounce the *Salam* and *Assalam* with orthodox accuracy. The science of eating a pilaw with my fingers, and tearing away pieces of roast lamb as if I had never known the use of knife and fork, was acquired after a little gracie practice. At length, having negotiated the hire of an Arab and camel, and a party of *caftans* (caravan), and paid in advance for protection, I bade adieu to my old friend, Colonel Taylor, the British agent and resident, and set forth with some fifty companions, viz., three merchants, two moolahs, a special *atfar*, my servant, a sheik, and a party of twelve thieves under the denomination of pilgrims, returning from Mecca and acting as guards of the merchandise. We had made a four days' journey, and had halted for the night in the desert at a spot where the camel-thorn was tolerably abundant. It was Christmas Eve, and had eaten a good supper of lamb, stewed in dried apricots, preparatory to a snooze, when my attention was attracted to a wailing cry in another part of the bivouac. I listened; gradually this was followed by a murmur, and then another cry, and soon the whole party was in a state of excitement very unusual among sober Mussulmans. I told my servant, Hummid, to go quietly and ascertain the cause. He was not long gone when he hurried back with tottering steps to tell me that the plague had broken out in the caravan, and not a soul was safe. Two men were dying, one had died; others were sick, and all were apprehensive. I knew that the fatal disease of Asiatic cholera had appeared in the city just as we were leaving. Thinking counsel with Hummid, I removed my rug and saddle-bags to some distance to windward of the whole party, and pondered the wisest course. It would never do to go on in fellowship with full disease, and perhaps be left a corpse in the middle of the desert. It might be equally fatal to return. Before midnight, however, I resolved on the latter course, and saddling my horse I was soon on the way back alone, bidding Hummid follow on the camel. A few hours sufficed to accomplish, at a trot and a gallop, the distance which walking would require. I was nearly four days (about twenty-four hours of locomotion) to master.

Arrived at the principal gate of the city of Bagdad, horse and man equally jaded, I was about to enter, when I found my plague was in town, and no one was permitted to enter until he had served twenty days' quarantine! Here was a situation—and on Christmas Day, too! It was in vain that I protested I was a friend of the resident's. Colonel Taylor had fled with his family to Bassorah, and the Armenian substitute did not know me. I offered money—I made promises—all in vain. I was doomed to hold high festival in the desert with the hungry vultures hovering above me, rather offering than a scanty meal than resting one myself. I was swimming in the sea of affliction. When I was in the hope of ingress, even if it were safe to be in the infected place. At once resolved to abandon the poor camel, and putting my servant behind me, we rode down to the banks of the river (Tigris) and sought a boat. No one was to be seen! The people had fled to Bassorah in every available vessel. There were, however, we were told, some boats a few miles lower down the stream. We set off for the locality, but had not gone far before we came upon an encampment of Bedouines—thieves and murderers of the

worst dye. With the keenness and rapidity of vultures, three or four of them, lance in rest, rushed out to stop, and of course to rob me. Resistance, I knew, would be futile. There was only one escape: I turned my horse's head to the stream, then a few yards off, and putting spurs to his flanks, leaped in, and was seen floating down with the rapid current, which the Arabs appropriately enough call the *Djeer*, or javelin. The leap dislodged the faithful Hummid, and deposited him on the bank. Escaping the random shot of the Bedouines, and keeping close to the bank for an hour and a half, I was carried down to a little canoe-built village, where my horse was brought up (nothing else could have stopped the poor wretch) by a cluster of boats. We got on to the bank, and were hospitably treated; and I then made arrangements for a trip to Bassorah, after spending my Christmas holiday in the Tigris.

## CHRISTMAS DAY IN A LAZARETTO.

In the winter of 1833, I had arrived at Odessa from Asiatic Turkey. The unlooked-for flag, hoisted by command of the visiting surgeon of the port, compelled the brig I was in to toss about in the roadstead a week before it was admitted to the mole, or quarantine harbor. Then I was required to send my clothes for fumigation, and at the end of another week the authorities permitted me to land and take up my quarters in the lazaretto for fourteen days more, "on suspicion of plague." The *Odessa lazaretto* is built in the form of a quadrangle. Each room is separated from its neighbor by a double wall, between which a sentinel takes his station, so that neighbors had no communication with each other. There is a small court-yard in front of each room, and a double iron grating—one row of grating a few feet before the other—keeps the prisoners from any personal talk with the outer world, represented by the resident surgeon and his aide, the surgeon and the chaplain. In the room adjoining mine were confined a Greek and a young woman, who passed a portion of their time in singing to the music of a guitar and occasionally a tambourine. Much of the rest was spent in eating, drinking and sleeping, to judge from the long intervals of silence. But there were noisy episodes, which conveyed strong proofs that the lady could scold as well as sing, and sometimes the quarrels rose to a terrible pitch, a thump, followed by a scream, furnished all the drama.

It was Christmas Day. The snow fell heavily, deadening the sound of the church bells, which, through a broken pane, reminded me of the holy festival. I expected to hear my neighbors sing hymns. My own time was devoted to my books—the only relief to an enforced solitude. Towards evening, while the guard slept, I distinctly heard the voice of the man Greek. He seemed to be growing rather than speaking, and in the intervals of his silence I heard the partial *ta-oo* to sleep. But again, my servant, the expostulations, the outbursts, disturbed my quiet. And now the woman became voluble, and spasmodic bursts of grief alone interrupted the torrent of her eloquence. Ever and anon the man called out what appeared to be "Silence!" adding a few words (none of which were distinct enough to be caught) in a minatory tone. Then came another struggle, words—bitter words—stuffed again, a heavy fall, a scream—silence again.

I could not sleep; what had been the cause of the last quarrel? Had the "peace and good will" taught by the Redeemer, whose natal day the outer Christian world was celebrating, ultimately prevailed; and were the recent antagonists illustrating the Horatian maxim, that the calling of evils is the renewal of love? Or had the last fall so stunned the feebler of the two individuals as to render the revival of either love or anger temporarily impossible? I was not long in doubt. It was past midnight, when I was awakened by dolorous cries and heavy sobs, vehement protestations and earnest apostrophes in the voice of the man. I knocked loudly at the wall to suggest silence. He evidently did not heed the knocking. I called out in good Italian, "Be quiet; it was no avail. I roused up the Greek, and asked him what was the matter with the gentleman. My custodian suggested he was drunk. I could not, however, divest my mind of the idea that a deed of darkness had been perpetrated. The night wore away. I could not sleep. I no longer heard the voice of the woman—even the man's voice was hushed; but, instead of the usual sounds, my ear was assailed with knockings on the floor, and a noise as of a saw or file at work. When the restaurant came round in the morning to take orders for breakfast, I told him what I had heard, and suggested that the lady might be ill, and need medical aid. He went next door, but was sent away with the intimation that nothing was wanted. Two or three more days elapsed; the time had arrived for my release. On the very day, indeed, when I was to be emancipated, my neighbors were also to be freed. I heard the officers arrive next door. Some words were uttered, followed by an altercation; then the man cried bitterly. What could be the matter? More officers came; the man was fettered and taken away. Where was the woman? He had labored her with anger; and, under some absurd notion that her existence would be forgotten by the authorities, he had taken up two planks, and deposited the dead body of the poor girl beneath them. This explanation, I told him, which followed upon the silence. When I was in the way, I saw my quondam neighbor sitting in a verandah of the place where I went to reclaim my fumigated apparel, guarded by two soldiers. He was a little, old man of malignant aspect. I remembered having seen him on the mole with a handsome young Greek whom I supposed to be his child. No one knew exactly what their relative position was. It was enough that he had shed her blood on Christmas night.

A CHRISTMAS GALE.  
It was in the African summer of 1826.

## A VICTIM OF EARTHQUAKES.

An Account of the Earthquakes that have Visited Lisbon, the Portuguese Capital.

It is as a city against which the internal forces of nature have conspired with unparalleled frequency and fury that Lisbon is popularly known in other countries. With the memory of previous disasters from the same cause, extending back more than eight hundred years, it was hardly to be expected that the recent shocks would not excite considerable alarm among the population. Between the years 1000 and 1146 three cases were destroyed. In 1393 and 1722 the visitation was repeated with increased severity. In 1537 the earth was convulsed at intervals of three successive days, when twenty-five hundred houses were destroyed, and thirty thousand persons perished. In 1679 three streets were destroyed, and in 1694 and 1722 the visitation was repeated with increased severity. In 1537 the earth was convulsed at intervals of three successive days, when twenty-five hundred houses were destroyed, and thirty thousand persons perished. 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