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## Through the Snow.

For what should I watch when the snow lies white  
On the top of the distant hill?  
For what should I listen when all is hush'd  
And when even the brook is still?  
I wait for I know that my love will come,  
On some errand of mercy bent,  
And my lady's face will be glad and bright  
With the charm of a sweet content.  
So I wait for the crackle of frozen snow,  
For a step that seteth my heart aglow,  
For a voice whose music too well I know,  
As my lady comes through the snow.  
I know she will come, for the snow is hard  
When it lies at the poor man's door,  
And therefore my love with her gentle heart  
Thinks the rich should befriend the poor;  
So not vainly shall I for her coming wait,  
And perchance it may even be  
My lady shall learn from to-day to own  
That her pity should reach to me.  
So I wait for the crackle of frozen snow,  
For a step that seteth my heart aglow,  
For a voice whose music too well I know,  
As my lady comes through the snow.  
And then when she comes through the crisp  
White snow,  
Will she meet me with glad surprise?  
Ah! then, shall I read what my heart would  
know  
In the gleam of her sweet blue eyes?  
I know she will give me at least a smile,  
And my heart in its light shall glow,  
For love, in its warmth, can defy the cold,  
And enliven through the north wind blow.  
So I wait for the crackle of frozen snow,  
For a step that seteth my heart aglow,  
For a voice whose music too well I know,  
As my lady comes through the snow.

## The Major's Vindication.

"Miss Marble, I wish to speak with you a moment before you go."  
Katharine Marble—or rather "Kitty," as every one had called her for the last twenty years, the term of her existence—paused as she was in the act of leaving the postoffice, of which she was the sole clerical force, and turned toward the superior officer to meet the smile which made attractive the face of Major Wynne when he spoke to any one, friend or foe, though in truth the latter were few.  
The girl, a plump, pretty brunette, had been "assistant postmaster" in the village postoffice for three years, though the affable major had held his position but a few months, since the death of the former incumbent, a man well burdened with years, who had presided over the distribution of letters and papers for nearly two scores of years.  
The non-time shadows had crept closely up beside the buildings as if to avoid the heat of the bright summer day, as Kitty turned with a questioning look. Major Wynne's smile was as bland as ever, but his voice had an uncertain sound as he continued a trifle deprecatingly:  
"The fact is, Miss Marble, I feel compelled to state that the increasing duties of this office require that I should employ, not more efficient help, for that—and his smile grew more bland, if possible—"would be impossible to find, but some one who could assume the responsibility of the office to an extent hardly within the province of a lady assistant."  
Major Wynne's smile grew almost imperceptible as he met the amazed look which flashed from the black eyes of the girl before him, though her lips uttered no sound.  
"I know this comes rather unexpectedly," he continued, finding that she made no reply, "and places me in a very disagreeable position. The office, as you know, will admit of but one assistant, and there are various other things you could do equally remunerative. You might teach school the coming fall and winter in district No. 8, if you wished."  
The girl fairly shivered, spite of the warmth of the day, as she thought of the dingy schoolhouse perched on the bleak hill, of the rows of tow-headed urchins and unmanageable girls, sharpened, critical, ferocious, and the dull life of country farmhouses compared with her busy, pleasant life in the village, and her face mirrored her thoughts as she at length answered:  
"Of course, Mr. Wynne, I can find no fault with your desire for other assistance than mine, and as it is quite necessary for me to earn a living at something I shall be thankful for any kindness toward enabling me to help myself."  
Her measured, even tones were totally unlike her usually quick, alert mode of speaking, and the color was gone from her cheeks.  
"Who will succeed me?" she asked, after a moment's uncomfortable silence.  
"Mr. Rawley's clerk, young Gray; he is a smart, capable fellow, and will do his best to please the public. I am very sorry that—"  
"Please say no more on this subject," she interrupted, hastily. "When does my term of service expire?"  
"Well, I thought a month's notice would be sufficient. Mr. Gray will come to the office immediately, and by that time will have become familiar with the details of the work."  
She went out into the sunshine, scarcely heeding its brightness, for this dismissal was a severe blow to her. She had taken pride in her work, what would have been dull routine to some, she performed with pleasure; had the same kindly manners for young or old, rich or poor, and had come to seem part and parcel of the otherwise somewhat dingy and unattractive postoffice.  
She walked slowly over the uneven plank sidewalk, her eyes cast down, looking neither to the right nor left. She took no notice of those she met, till a young man raised his hat and spoke pleasantly to her. Then she looked up. A tall, fair young man, only a year or so her senior, stood smilingly before her.

"How do you do, Mr. Gray?" she returned, in answer to his salutation. He noticed her look of discomposure. "Why did you resign at the postoffice?" he queried, with the familiarity of an old acquaintance, as he walked up the street beside her.  
Her first thought was to give him an evasive answer. "I will tell you the truth," she said, quietly. "Mr. Wynne wishes more responsible help; in fact, wishes a gentleman assistant." The young man whistled softly. "I was given to understand that you were leaving of your own accord, though not in the same words," he returned, "or I should not have accepted the major's offer."  
She laughed, a trifle forced and unnatural. "You are not at all to blame; I hope you will succeed, and I am confident you will give satisfaction."  
With these few words she left him, tripped lightly up a path to a door and vanished, while Allan Gray mused to himself: "I don't understand this matter. She is certainly more competent than I am, fully understands the work, and will work for \$100 a year less than the salary he has offered me."  
For the next month Kitty Marble and Allan Gray labored together sorting letters and papers, filling mail bags and waiting upon the rough crowd who came from out of town, for Unionville had no rival postoffice for miles. And Major Wynne took a vacation during this month, returning with a smile even more affable than usual.

And Kitty, failing to find anything more promising, accepted the school in district No. 8, and strove with commendable zeal to instill some enthusiasm into the thick heads of the stolid crowd over which she was installed as ruler.  
The schoolhouse was but four miles from the village, and during the fall term she visited home two or three times a week, meeting always a warm greeting from the business men and others who remembered her bright face and cheerful ways so well. And the village gossips noticed and commented upon the fact that Allan Gray was frequently seen driving Major Wynne's spirited colt, with Kitty Marble seated in the buggy beside him, for the major seemed well pleased with his new assistant, and was disposed to favor him in all possible ways.  
But when the bleak New England winter came and the snow lay piled in deep drifts, poor Kitty had a lonely time indeed, for someone who had changed slightly toward Allan Gray and no longer tendered him the use of his colt nor gave him so many holidays as formerly, though the young man could not really say that Major Wynne ill-treated him in the slightest degree.

The winter term of school was two-thirds over, and in another month Kitty would be at home again. The committee had praised her, as she thought, more than she deserved, and one of the village schools had been offered her, and the thought of being one more a daily resident of Unionville, to say nothing of a largely increased salary, helped her to bear the monotony of her present life. She sat talking with the woman of the house where she boarded the evening after this welcome news had been imparted to her. Her heart was light and her whole being thrilled with happiness.

"Well," said the mistress of the house, whose husband was away in the lumber woods, "I'm mighty glad for your sake, though we'd like to have 'yer agin'. You've done more good to these young ones of mine than all the other teachers put together. Zach, here, was 'a'ys called a dunce till you took him in hand, an' now he can cipher an' write an' read an' spell, an' land only knows what he doesn't know."  
The rude, unlettered mother smiled proudly upon her awkward, half-grown boy as though she believed he would be at least a college professor before many years had elapsed, while Zach grinned bashfully and turned away to hide his confusion. The lad walked over to a window and looked out. Then he started back quickly, all traces of gratified vanity gone from his freckled face.  
"Oh, marm! teacher! there's a terrible fire som'ers!" he gasped; "look out an' see!"  
"Sure enough, when the startled women and frightened children looked from the windows the southern sky was red with the light of a conflagration no many miles away.

"It's Unionville," said the mother of Zach, when she had found her voice; "the hull town's agin'!" and she sank back helplessly in her chair, while Kitty trembled with a new-born terror. If the town was burned up, that would become of her promised school in the village with its attendant happiness?  
Nearly the whole night long they watched the huge masses of flame-brightened smoke roll up and surge away to the eastward, for a strong west wind was blowing.

The next day they learned that over a dozen buildings of more or less magnitude, including the postoffice, had been swept away, the fire raging till nothing was left upon which to expend its fury, though an easterly wind would have swept nearly the entire town.  
It was a couple of weeks before Kitty walked the streets of dearly-beloved Unionville and looked upon the blackened ruins of what had once been imposing walls of clapboards and shingles, for the village was built almost wholly of wood. The postoffice had found other quarters, though the lock-boxes, the boxes with glass fronts, the pigeon-holes, delivery-window and drawers, all so dear to Kitty from long association, were sadly wanting as the girl stepped into the unfamiliar place.  
"Was all the property destroyed?" she asked of Allan Gray, who was

alone in the imprudent office, his usually fair face whiter than she had ever seen it, and wearing a strangely haggard and careworn look.

"Everything but what was in the safe, and what is worst of all, a number of hundred dollars and a lot of stamps which I was positive I put in the safe could not be found, and must have burned with the building. Some books also cannot be found containing accounts and returns to the department at Washington."  
Mr. Marsh gazed upon her in speechless astonishment, while the eyes of the officer twinkled as he said: "Do as the young lady wishes; there is no harm in it, and there may be much good. I will take the stage for the north in the morning, and will mail the letters. I will return on the stage at night, and get out of the village a ways."

"I've no objections to trying it, but, really, Miss Marble, why are you so interested in this matter?" asked Mr. Marsh.  
"No, no," he interrupted, hastily, his fair face tinged with color and his sensitive lip quivered for an instant; "Major Wynne could not have treated me better if I had been his own son. He says the deficiency caused by the fire will have to be allowed by special act of Congress. But what troubles me is the fact that I remember so distinctly of seeing the money and other valuables in the safe."  
He turned wearily away to wait upon an applicant, after which he resumed his story to Kitty who had stood silently meantime: "I wanted to resign my clerkship, but the major wouldn't listen to it. He said it was only a mistake, and that they would occur if all possible precautions were taken. I insisted upon leaving at first, I was so positive that I had put the things in the safe, but he said some night cast suspicion of wrongdoing upon me if I did, and so I staid."

Kitty made no comment. She learned that Major Wynne had taken the safe to his house as soon as it could be cooled sufficiently, but beyond the fact that he had declared that no money or stamps were found upon opening it, she could learn nothing. She finished her school in district No. 8, rested a few weeks, and took up her duties again in a village school-room to teach the spring term.  
A strangely sober, almost somber mood had fallen upon Kitty. Her incipient flirtation or embryo courtship with Allan Gray was to all appearances at a standstill. Though the young couple did not avoid each other, yet there was a certain reserve in their conduct not calculated to ripen friendship into a warmer feeling. The postoffice had not been assigned to permanent quarters, nor would it be till the late summer or early fall, though apartments sufficiently commodious had been secured for the sum-lake in the village.

The days had scarcely reached their greatest length when another stir of excitement rippled through the current of life in Unionville. A detective from Washington had appeared in the village to investigate matters at the postoffice. Strange rumors floated upon the air, and Allan Gray and Major Wynne became objects of much curiosity to persons at all tainted with gossip propensities.  
Nothing could be learned definitely; only that a heavy deficiency was laid out at the door of the Unionville postoffice, which Major Wynne declared could be accounted for by the fire of the previous winter, though matters since that date did not appear satisfactory to the government official sent to investigate the affair. Letters containing small sums of money were claimed to have been lost, and discrepancies in the accounts were ferreted out, and now both the major and young Gray wore haggard faces and walked with uncertain step. But neither was arrested, Major Wynne declaring that the matter would be eventually cleared up and that he believed Allan Gray was the soul of honor.

So the major's bondsmen took the office under their immediate charge, retaining young Gray, though sorely against his will, telling him that it would be better for him to remain till the matter was thoroughly investigated. The detective returned to Washington, and Major Wynne walked about the village streets, smiling again, asserting that he had gained a thread by which the whole matter could be unraveled, though what this new-found clue was he could not divulge for the present.

But Allan Gray seemed falling in health and spirits, and oftentimes Kitty, whose school was not in session at that time, was called in to assist or take the place of the dispirited young clerk, and sometimes Major Wynne was also called upon to render assistance. And not a few people had come to hint openly that the cause of Allan Gray's disquietude and falling health was due to a load of conscious guilt.  
The government detective had put in another unexpected appearance and was closeted in the evening with one of Major Wynne's bondsmen—the acting postmaster—when some one rapped sharply upon the door. Mr. Marsh, the bondsman, opened the door and stood face to face with Kitty Marble. Her eyes were a strange, intense look, and a vivid color burned in her cheeks.  
"I beg pardon for intruding upon you," she said in a quiet, even tone.  
"Mrs. Marsh told me you were engaged, but I made bold to call upon you just the same. I want a favor."  
The detective eyed her keenly, while Mr. Marsh answered: "Certainly, Miss Marble, I will grant with pleasure any favor that I can."  
"Do not make any rash promises," she said with a half smile, and then she continued, earnestly: "Mr. Marsh, I want some decoy letters sent through this office with money in them, and then I want you and this gentleman to watch Mr. Gray as he goes to the office to-morrow evening. It can be done easily from a flight of stairs which run up at the rear of the back office. The partition is merely of boards, and I will arrange that loop-holes shall be made. Mr. Gray will be absent until evening to-morrow, and I

will be in the office alone. Here are some letters with money in them," and she produced some half-dozen letters, addressed in various styles of writing to parties out of the State, the fact that they contained money being apparent to an experienced eye and hand.

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## SCIENTIFIC NOTES.

Man, the goat and the wild carnivora are the only animals capable of resisting the tsetse fly of Africa.  
A Belgian scientist concludes that the seat of the electricity of storms is not, as generally admitted, in the moist region of the atmosphere, but in the cold and dry superstratum.  
A German paper, speaking of bread making, says: "Fungoid germs may be introduced with bad flour into the bread, which will not be destroyed by the baking temperature of the inside of the loaf (212 degrees F.). In the year 1840 an orange-colored fungus was often observed in France in the bread, and indeed often in such quantities that red, evil-smelling dust particles would issue when the bread was broken."  
Experiments made by J. Aitken confirm the usual notion that pure water has a blue tint; but he finds that the theory of selective reflection is insufficient to account for all the variations as to tint met with in the case of natural accumulations of water. Whitish particles are suspended in the water of the Mediterranean and the tint varies from deep blue to chalky blue-green, according to the proportion in which these particles may be present.

A very faulty lightning-conductor may sometimes protect a building. M. Hirn tells of such a case which lately occurred at Colmar. A thin iron rod, about twenty-six feet long, had a conical brass point screwed on the top, and was connected below by means of a series of pieces of thin wire, having terminal eyes, with a block of iron about twenty inches long in the ground. During a violent thunder-storm lightning melted the brass point, but the current seems to have nowhere left the conductor. M. Hirn insists that the mere fact of a lightning discharge on the point of a conductor is proof of very imperfect construction, as during more than forty years of observation, he has never seen lightning strike one of the forty or fifty lightning rods of the factories of Logelbach, although he has found that currents are almost constantly passing through the rods in the presence of thunder-storms.

## Door Knobs.

There is hardly any object that everybody handles so frequently, finds so necessary and yet thinks so little about, as the door knob. A gentleman who has all his life kept up an intimate business acquaintance with door knobs, has recently published a treatise on the subject. He tells us that the door knobs formerly were made of wood or cast iron—big, solid, heavy things—and for a time the American ones were the same. But that could not last in this country, where taste and inventive art are active in the combination of the useful and the beautiful for every use in life. We soon commenced to make our own door knobs, upon the old English plans at first, but ere long with other materials, and with an eye to improvement in form and color, beginning a progressive course of improvement that already puts us in this specialty, as in many others, ahead of the world in the production of goods that are at once beautiful, durable and cheap enough to be popular. It was about 1843 or 1848 that the manufacture of door knobs from clay was commenced in this country. Clays that would change their colors in baking were selected and mixed together, after being very finely ground, pressed into molds, baked to what is technically known as biscuit, then coated with a fusible compound called "glaze," and rebaked at sufficient heat to melt the glaze and give them a glassy surface. They had a dark mottled appearance, were known as "mineral door knobs," and sold as high as \$18 a dozen pairs. They still have a place in the market, but they are worth now only eighty cents a dozen pairs—the cheapest made.

The greatest stride in the progress of door-knob manufacture was taken in 1873 or 1874. The material employed is bronze, mainly composed of nine parts of copper and one of tin. The molds prepared for it are made with such extreme nicety and fidelity to their pattern that they reproduce lines as delicate as the veinings of a tiny leaflet, and the molten metal is forced into them by screw pressure while they are inclosed in a vacuum box. The articles made in this way are known as compression bronze goods, and a variety of claims to superiority over other bronze goods are made for them, the principal of which, as far as the public is concerned, is their beauty. Some of them are plated with nickel and gold, nickel and silver, or silver and gold in various combinations. The most expensive are those with combined decorations of enamel and gold, which mount up to \$15 or \$16 a pair.  
Not a great while ago, a rich banker in Portland, Oregon, sent all the way here to New York for the door knobs for a magnificent mansion he was building. He wanted dozens of knobs, but the highest number of any one kind of the same size was three. In each room, however, the design selected for it was carried through large and small sizes, wherever a knob was used. He also had the taste to select the three shades of bronze in which fine knobs are made, so as to harmonize with the prevailing hue of the woods or decorations of the apartments for which they were severally designed.  
In some old European castles and palaces one sees door knobs of silver, and silver fluted with gold, but such things are rarely if ever made now, never in this country.—New York Sun.

## An Animated Calendar.

Orange Bennett, colored, is an animated calendar, says the Elizabeth-town (Ky.) News. Ask him what day of the month it is, or what day of the week Christmas or Fourth of July comes on, and, without a moment's hesitation, he gives the correct answer. Any date you desire within two years he will give instantly. What makes it so remarkable is he doesn't know one figure from another.

"You see, grandma, we perforate an aperture in the apex and a corresponding aperture in the base, and by applying the egg to the lips and forcibly inhaling the breath, the shell is entirely discharged of its contents." "Dear me!" exclaimed the old lady, "what wonderful improvements they do make. Now, in my younger days they just made a hole in each end and sucked."

## John Edward Payne.

(The remains of the actor, journalist, playwright and diplomat, John Edward Payne, are interred at Tunis, North Africa. Arrangements are being perfected by W. W. Corcoran, the wealthy Washington philanthropist, to have these sacred relics of the author of "Home, Sweet Home," exhumed and transported to the United States for re-interment in Oak Hill cemetery, in Washington City, where a suitable monument will be erected.)

O sacred ship, safe o'er the wandering foam,  
Death the dear relics of the wandered Payne,  
Whose weary soul oft sighed for rest in vain,  
O'er life's wide desert forced afar to roam,  
Vexed in affairs and men, no learned toms  
He filled, the applause of the intellect to gain.  
But, for the heart, he sang one deathless strain—  
Homeless himself, the song of "Home, Sweet Home."  
Serving his country on a foreign shore,  
Death took him by the hand, and, whispering, said  
"Home!" and, rejoicing, forth with him he went.  
His dead give, Corcoran, to be moved no more,  
A home in your loved City of the Dead,  
And carve his lyric on his monument.  
—W. L. Shoemaker.

## HUMOR OF THE DAY.

A maritime romance—A wedding. Successful books—Those bound to sell. Protection for home industries—A lock and key on the pantry door—Waterloo Overburden. The toothless man ought to be a sweet talker, for all his words must of necessity be gum drops. Earth has nothing softer than a woman's heart, unless, perhaps, it be a tomato in the prime of life.—Lowell Citizen. "If a two-wheeled wagon is a bicycle and a three-wheeled wagon a tricycle, what would you call a five-wheeled one?" A V-hicle, of course.—Philadelphia News. The reason aesthetes so admire the stork is that he can stand for hours on one leg and look as though he didn't know anything and didn't want to.—Somerville Journal. It is some two hundred years since punctuation came into use, but it will probably be two hundred more before the party who sends contributions to the local paper adopts the system.—Rockland Courier. The Rome Sentinel thinks it was not altogether inappropriate that a bald-headed man, in making a will, should devote his faculties to some wise provision that would prevent the heirs from falling out. No more the widowed cheers our eyes  
With agitating and aster.  
No more the kind do kick the flies  
That tussle them in the pasture,  
No more are rural maids employed  
In masses with the "utter."  
But well they fill the aching void  
With breakfast cakes and butter.

A Story is told of an Englishman who was lately obliged to travel in Ireland—a duty he approached with fear and trembling. His frightened senses were startled on hearing a fellow passenger in the railway carriage remark to another, "I'm just after bein' over to Kilpatrick." "And I," replied the other, "an' after bein' over to Kilpatrick." "What murderers they are," thought the Englishman. "And to think that they talk of their assassinations so boldly." But the conversation went on: "And there are you goin' now?" asked assassin No. 1. "I'm goin' home and then to Kilmore." was No. 2's reply. The Englishman's blood curdled. "Kilmore, is it?" added No. 1. "You'd better be comin' along wid me to Kilumale." It is related that the Englishman left the train at the next station. "Speaking of owing men and feeling unpleasant whenever you meet them," said Colonel Mickle, "brings up a rather unpleasant remembrance of a man to whom I was indebted. There were numerous men in Little Rock who had financial claims on me, and whenever I met them I could not help but feel a sort of shiver creep over me, but there was one man whom I liked to meet. "Didn't bring up any unpleasant memory, eh?" man Pixon, who owes nearly every man in town. "No, sir." "Didn't shudder when you met him on the street?" "No. I'd walk past him as though I owned the street." "I suppose you knew, then, that he did not need the money?" "No, sir, for I was well aware that he did need it." "Well, what was the cause?" "He was blind."—Arkansas Traveler.

A Wonderful Cave. A wonderful cave has been found near Sawtooth, Idaho Territory. One chamber which was explored is said to contain the image of a man made of what had the appearance of silver. At the head was a helmet of a peculiar pattern, which were three imitation feathers made of gold or copper. From the mouth of the strange image proceeded a flame. A theory is that the prehistoric race that erected it had discovered a gas-jet and that there communication down through the body to the solid rock, from which the gas proceeds perpetually. On the walls were hieroglyphics, which, of course, could not be read. In one corner was a very large human skeleton, at least nine feet high, and by it a stone tomahawk and a large cross-bow, which, although it had the appearance of being perfectly sound, fell into a thousand pieces when an attempt was made to lift it. A stone mortar containing some very rich gold specimens was found, and also some large pieces of ruby silver.

It is estimated that the liquor saloons of Chicago sell \$10,000,000 worth of liquors per year. Of this amount \$6,000,000 is net profit.

All nature is a vast symbolism. Every material fact has sheathed within it at least one spiritual truth.