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The Coming of the Snow.

The clouds were copper-dyed all day, And struggled in each other's way, Until the darkness drifted down To the summer-forsaken town. Said people, passing in the lane, 'It will be snow,' or 'Twill be rain;' And school-boys, laughing in a row, Looked through the panes and wished for snow.

A Rescue From Cannibals.

Hulda came down into the bowels of the earth to find me, as she usually was compelled to do. There was no necessity for her remaining amid the rust and roaches, the gloom and interminable steam of that cavernous kitchen floor of ours on Brooklyn Heights. We had kept boarders now for years and years, or perhaps the boarders had kept us, or it might have been a mutual eking out of existence. But I took care of the cooking, because in that the main strength of success lay, and I didn't want to keep boarders all my life. When we began it was to please Brother Bob. He was a well-to-do salesman then in the city, and used to come down to the dear old homestead with so many airs and graces about him that we grew to look upon him with a sort of awe, and wondered if this prinky gentleman in the high hat and linen duster could be our Bob that used to kick all the bottoms out of the chairs, and never had a whole knee in his breeches; that robbed the birds' nests, worried the schoolmaster, was nearly drowned in the millrace and had his leg broken by a fall from the hay-rick. Nobody would dream he had ever a kink in his leg, now that he had got to be a commercial man. He was as straight and tall as the finest of our scarlet-runner poles, and butter wouldn't melt in his mouth, he was that smooth and sleek and soft-spoken. How surprised we were when he proposed himself to go and hear David Devine's first sermon, holding the hymn book all the way, and carrying Hulda's best shawl on his arm! I used to be his favorite in the good old days when he didn't know a snub nose from a Grecian one, and Bob found my curly hair and freckles much finer than the silken locks and delicate complexion of Hulda. He used to call Hulda a milk-and-water baby, and I was the one he came to in all his scrapes and short-comings. But, somehow, after he got to the city, I never could find much favor in his sight, and had no relish for a dead delight. The boy was gone from me as utterly as if he lay in the old church-yard by Sister Betty's side. The memory of him was far sweeter than any present delight in his prosperity. I was always opposed to giving up the homestead when father and mother died, and going to the city to keep house for Bob. But Bob persisted, and won over Hulda, as he always did. I think he had a sneaking design from the first that Hulda should win the admiration of one of his employers—the bachelor member of the firm of Marley & Brothers. He came out with Bob in one of the vacations, and certainly seemed to admire Hulda, as one might say, ravenously. He ate more in a quiet way than any person I ever saw; and it seemed a very high compliment, in Bob's eyes, that while he was eating, his grave, owl-like eyes were fixed upon Hulda, though why I can't say, as I always did the cooking. I used to tell our young preacher, Davy Devine, that he couldn't expect the hot place would have the terror for me it had for others, seeing that I was used to the hottest corner, and rather liked it. David made some kind little reply in his pleasant way; and I must say my choice for Hulda had always been this handsome, fair-voiced, pure-hearted, God-loving young neighbor of ours. He had always cared for her since they were children together; and I knew father and mother would have been well content to have Hulda the parson's wife in the old Dutch church where they had gone together year in and year out, and now lay resting close by. Hulda was little more than a child, but was taking kindly to the wonderfully pleasant ways of Providence just then; and after mother died she clung more and more to me and David. He and I used to talk the matter over, even to the furnishing of the old parsonage, never dreaming but that all would be right. I discerned as natural to me as

seed-time and harvest that Hulda should marry David, and walk up the aisle in her plain silk gown and close bonnet, and everybody should say that a sweet wife was the young pastor's. But in the meantime Bob married a fashionable city girl, and in the hot seasons he brought his wife and children home. I couldn't find much fault with the girl, though I tried to hard enough; she spent too much time distorting her pretty hair out of its natural comeliness, and put as many queer artificial humps about her as a camel; but she had a winsome, cheery way with her, and I always had a weakness for beauty, be it in man, woman or beast; and, besides, she always had a good word for the young parson, often luring Marley away with her coquetry and wiles, so that David could have a word with Hulda. 'He's worth a dozen of that bald, blinking Marley,' she would say, 'and I'll do what I can Magda, to foil Bob's plans.' She was such a good-natured creature I wish it had been God's will to spare her to her young brood, of which she was over-fond; but while they were three mannikins the gay young mother got cold and died, and nothing would do but we must go to the city to keep house for Bob. Hulda's tender heart was wrung for Bob's widowed and lonely condition, but I could see under his stiff, hard melancholy a bitter quantity of worldly forethought and speculation. I knew what was coming, and, indeed, was prepared for anything. What did it matter now that the blessed old homestead was out of our hold? I had kept some of the mahogany furniture, much to Bob's disgust, who seemed to chafe the richest acres we had, and spoke slightly of the knots and gnarls in our dear old apple trees that every body knew made the fruit all the sweeter. Bob sniffed with disdain at my holding the mortgage for my share of the estate. 'Ready money would be much better, Magda,' he said; 'but I had my way, thank God! And I told Bob up and down I wanted it understood that there was to be no obligation on either side—Hulda and I would take the city house, and he and the three children should board with us. To help along with the expenses I took a few more boarders, and still a few more, for one brought another. I had a sort of faculty for cooking, and if there's one weakness in the human race more prevailing and besetting than that another, it's gluttony. I used to do my best to tempt the jaded yet voracious palate of that yellow dyspeptic Marley, an I gave him many a grim hobgoblin for company after he'd left my sweet Hulda, for I couldn't forgive his winning her consent to marry him, when he knew the core of her heart was another's. The coming to the city and finding out how pretty she was had turned Hulda's head. Bob's will and cunning were strong and untiring, and anyway Hulda gave up poor David Devine, and agreed to marry that grim and greedy Marley. I lay awake at night worrying about it—my heart was so sore perplexed for poor David, and wrathful against Bob, and distrustful of Providence. I grew desperate and wicked, but David stuck to his faith, dear fellow, though he hadn't strength to stick to the old spot where he had been so happy and so miserable. He went out as a missionary to some of those cannibal islands, where I wonder the women didn't eat him—he was so handsome and so good. The very name of Marley became an abomination to me, and I forced a promise from Hulda that she wouldn't marry for a couple of years, during which time I hoped for heaven knows what that was strange or remarkable. I had small doubt but that poor David was food for the fishes or the cannibals, for I had heard no word from him; but I kept on praying and hoping for a hurricane that might sweep every Marley off the face of the earth. Whenever Marley took Hulda out he brought a carriage, and as it wasn't Bob's way to waste any luxury, he used very often to occupy the spare seat—he and a sister of Marley's, a high-nosed, high-colored, big-toothed young woman called Judith. I saw what was coming, and I told Bob he'd regret it to his dying day, but he married Judith Marley within that year. She disliked the trouble of housekeeping, so he brought her to board with me. They took a suite of rooms on the second floor, and before she had been in the house a month she began to raise Cain, as I knew she would. Of which I was very glad, I should have been sorely disappointed if she had forced me to love her, as did the fond, flighty first wife of Bob; for to hate the Marleys had become my soul strength and tonic during the days of endless labor and weariness of body and soul. The spite I had against the whole Marley race, that had spoiled my Bob for me, and wheedled my sister into a perjury that broke the manly heart of David Devine—the spite I held for them one and all kept life in me when I should otherwise have fainted by the way. Bob saw that we couldn't live together, and took a furnished house down the street; for Bob was a big man now, and one of the partners of Marley & Brothers; but before Judith went away she gave me what she called a piece of her mind. By the grace of heaven it so happened that Hulda said one little word or two in my defense, when the ferretant turned upon her, and, among other insults, accused her of entrapping her brother into a marriage. Hulda did not reply, but there was something in her face that frightened Judith. She tried to eat the mischievous words, but I knew that the Marley link was broken. Poor Bob took up his wife's quarrel, though she could see

this second honeymoon of his had rather a bitter flavor. I felt sorry for him and the three poor little step-children as they went soberly down to their fine new house. I had Hulda to myself now, and will confess that I left no stone unturned to accomplish my purpose. I spared neither her suitor's age nor his infirmities, and repeated, with many a shy exaggeration, the taunt of Judith. So all poor Marley's entreaties, and the threats and wrath of Bob, were unable to mend the mischief of one woman's tongue. Hulda gave up Marley, and settled down with me to old-maidhood and the dreary monotony of keeping boarders. Even Hulda was past middle-age when she came down to me that morning on the kitchen floor. As I said, there was no necessity for Hulda's remaining among the rust and roaches, the clutter of the dishes, and the bustle of the black serving-maids. I had kept Hulda the lady manager of the house. Her laces were real, while mine were any two-penny chattering that came to hand; she rustled in her silks, while I got about in a gingham gown; but we worked together, Hulda and I, and the time had come now when we could shake the dust and ashes of this drudgery from our feet. It was growing hot for that season of the year. I had been thinking all the morning of the budding larches out on the old homestead, and the tender green of the willow slips down by the meadow. It seemed to me I could hear the young lambs bleat, and catch the silky breath of the clover as they chewed their early cud. It might have been the steam of the boarding-house breakfast that dimmed my eyes as I whispered to Hulda: 'It's all settled. The boarders must be told to-day. We're rid of all this din and drudgery. I've paid the last cent on the homestead, and it's ours, dearie, to have and hold forever.' 'And shall we live there alone, Magda?' she said—'only you and I?' 'I shall take Chloe to help about the house,' I said; 'but as to living alone, that's what I thought we'd been working and praying for. You certainly don't want to take any boarders along? Mrs. Post wants to bring her sick baby out for the summer, and that young student on the second floor back is pestering me to spend his vacation with us; but surely, Hulda, you would not begin our new life with boarders?' 'No, Magda, no,' she said, with that little melancholy, deprecatory, exasperating smile of hers; and as she went away she left the germ after her of rather a bitter misgiving, which ripened into full maturity when we got settled in the old homestead, with all our household gods about us. These deities wore a rueful and rusty air. There was something out of joint. It was Time himself, no doubt. The tall clock in the corner didn't tick in the old chery way, but put Hulda in mind of some weary jingle she had read, with the one refrain of 'Never, forever—forever, never.' I never could see, myself, the use of reading rhymes—either they are too silly or too grave—but Hulda had always been what they called romantic. I began to hate the approach of a moonlight night, for she would sit out-of-doors and run the risk of the ague; and when the air grew chill enough to have a comfortable fire on the hearth, Hulda spoiled it all by begging me not to light the lamps, and there she would sit in a blindman's holiday. I began to get the rickets myself; and though I wouldn't have owned to it for the world, was sorry I hadn't brought out with me Mrs. Post and her baby, and the young student on the second floor back. For one thing, I hadn't enough to do. Chloe did all the kitchen work, Hulda attended to the bedrooms, and the cooking that was left to me wasn't worth mentioning. It was enough to break one's heart to see the dishes come and go untouched and un-tasted. I would almost have been glad to see that greedy Marley come in for one hearty meal. There was nobody to brew or bake for; nobody to mend or make for; and, ah me! what a bitter cry I had one day when I stupidly stumbled into Bob's snuggery up under the eaves of the garret, and saw there the broken fishing rods, the old rabbit hutch, the bird traps, kites, marbles, and heaven knows what and all! I couldn't get the boy out of my mind, and began, now that I had plenty of time, to think that I might have been a little hard myself, and grew to wondering about the children of Bob's first wife that I'd given over to the clutch of Judith Marley without one word to cheer or comfort. The hard northern winter came on apace. All the little brooks froze tight, the tenor green of the larches and willows had given way to red and gold, and at last there was no color or substance left them but their skeleton branches against a leaden sky. The snow came down in whirling drifts, and day in, day out, the clock ticked the doleful refrain. I got out some patchwork, but put it away again—for who would inherit my handiwork?—and made up my mind we'd have no Christmas dainties that year to stare us dolefully out of countenance. Poor Chloe was getting dyspeptic already with overfeeding, and even her wool didn't tighten up in the old vigorous way. It was the third day before Christmas, when a storm set in of hail and snow and sleet, so that it was all we could do to get the dumb creatures about the place housed and fed. When all was done, I set the logs to blazing upon the hearth, and happily kept a warm drink in the ashes for Chloe, who was still fussing about the house, swinging the branches of the trees against the weather-boarding; and said I, 'Hulda, God save any

poor creatures at the mercy of this storm to-night!' 'Amen!' said Hulda. At that moment we both heard something like a human voice strained to the utmost, and Hulda started to her feet. 'Be quiet, Hulda,' I said, myself far from easy; 'it's only the shrieking of the wind.' But again we heard the voice, and again we heard my name. I reached for my cloak and hat, and buckled on my rubbers, while Hulda stood trembling by, when suddenly the door flew open, and a great gust of storm and sleet came pelting in, driving before it a man and some young children he was huddling before him like sheep in a tempest. They were blinded with the storm and half-frozen, but the boy dragged his sister by the hand, and poor Bob held the youngest child in his arms. 'Don't you us, Aunt Mag?' said the little fellow. 'I'm Bob, you know. The wagon all broke down, and we're jolly glad to get home.' Here the little man began to cry, for his brave heart was over-burdened, and the child himself was white as the snow outside, and seemed dazed and bewildered. 'See here, Mag,' he stammered out, 'I've brought the children to you to board for awhile. Everything's at sixes and sevens in the city; Marley & Brothers have gone to smash; but I'll get something in the way of a clerkship again, and pay the children's board, you know; they shan't be a burden to you, Mag.' 'A burden! It didn't seem much like a burden. Such a glad commotion as those little ones created, Hulda and Chloe putting dry clothes on them, and tricking them out as if for a baby masquerade. The hot posset was poured down their little throats, and a bonny supper was given them of hot milk and buns. 'There'll be something grand for breakfast,' I said, looking upon them as greedily as ever poor Marley did upon Hulda. How the old kitchen echoed with their romps and capers! They were all handsome, every one of them, with Bob's fine make and build, and beautiful eyes like their pretty dead mother's. 'Bob,' I said, choking yearningly over the thought, 'if you'll give them to me, the whole three, I'll spend my whole life in making them happy; and after I'm gone, they shall have the homestead and every penny I've got in the world.' 'Yes, yes,' said Bob, who had never ceased shivering, and was now as hot and red as he had been white and cold, 'I'll pay their board, Magda; this is only a temporary trouble. I hope to get a clerkship, quite a lucrative clerkship; but little Bob will never get through the storm—never! Keep hold of your sister, Bob,' cried my poor brother, in a loud voice, 'and keep the tail of my coat firm in your other hand; don't let go, my son, for God's sake, Bobby—don't let go!' He got upon his feet, and seemed to be plodding through the storm, and as he made his way to the kitchen door I coaxed him on up to bed in his own old room, that I had kept aired and comfortable to lighten my own aching heart. When the morning dawned and the doctor could get to us, poor Bob was wild in delirium; the only words he muttered or called aloud were about bonds and bills, dollars and fractions of dollars. His long white fingers seemed to hold a pen, and scratch, scratch the weary figures upon the counterpane till my eyes and brain ached for very pity. For two wretched days and nights he struggled with this sordid misery, the fiend of commercial fret and disaster never letting go his grip; but Christmas morning dawned clear and bright, and before the eastern sky had quite lost its glory Bob fell into a deep, untroubled sleep. How white and wan he looked! How thin and bloodless were the once busy fingers that now lay limp and still! At noon-time the sky was all one blaze of cloudless sunny blue, and to keep the room dark I strove to fasten an extra shawl over the window. Suddenly I heard Bob whispering my name in such a strange voice that I got down quickly and went over to the bedside, and was puzzled to hear a low laugh from his trembling lips. 'Say Mag,' he whispered, 'don't let mother know. I crept in through the window, and left some of my pants on the gooseberry bushes below; you'll patch 'em up, won't you, Mag? And keep mum about it. Such a lark as we had last night! Dave Devine and I painted the deacon's horse white and red; but keep mum, Mag—not a word for your life!' I kept mum. God knows I couldn't speak. I had got my boy Bob back again, but there was a sore tugging at my heart-strings. The doctor came and lingered long, then he turned to me—'My work is done,' he said. 'I was afraid from the first it would be useless; a higher and better work has begun. There is some one down stairs—a stranger in these parts, but no stranger to you or me, or this dear lad lying here. I wouldn't like to bring a new face among you just now, but this one will do. Bob,' he said, leaning over my poor brother—'Bob, here is an old friend to pray with us on this dear day that Christ was born.' Then there came into the room a man with brown skin and lusty growth—his hair was almost white, but his eyes had a familiar loving glow dear to the olden time. I did not care to question who he was or whence he came, but knelt silently at the bedside while he prayed. Bob's lips moved, but only with some boyish memory, and hour after hour went by. The day was at last waning;

I was alone with my brother. I heard the light breathing of his children, and mine now, in the room close by; the low voices of David and Hulda reached me once in a while from the lower floor. I might have been a hard and bitter woman, but as at last the day went out and took Bob with it, I felt a grim delight in my sore and aching heart that he was beyond the reach of the Marleys. —Harper's Magazine. Origin of the Stars and Stripes. A New York Herald correspondent sends to that paper an interesting account of a visit to Brington, seven miles from Northampton, England, the home of George Washington's ancestors. Referring to the church at Brington where the Washingtons were buried, the correspondent says: There are three tombs. The one in the chancel covers the grave of Lawrence Washington, who died in 1622. The inscription on the grave of the former reads as follows: HERE LIETH THE BODY OF LAWRENCE WASHINGTON BORN AND REIR OF ROBERT WASHINGTON OF SOLVAY IN THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON ESQUIRE WHO MARRIED MARGARET THE ELDEST DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM BUTLER OF TEE IN THE COUNTY OF WILTSHIRE ESQUIRE WHO HAD ISSUE SEVEN SONS AND TWO DAUGHTERS WITHIN LAWRENCE DECEASED THE 13 OF DECEMBER A. D. 1616. Those that by chance or choice of this last sight Know life to death resignes As day to night; But as the sunne retorne Revives the day So Christ shall us Though turnde to dust & clay. Above the inscription is chiseled in stone the arms of the Washington and Butler families. The other tombstone is in the nave; the inscription is on a brass plate let in the stone. It reads as follows: Here lies ye bodies of Elizab. Washington, widdowe, who changed this life for: immortallite ye 19th of March, 1622. As also ye body of Robert Washington, gent.: her late husband, second sonne of Robert Washington, of Solgrave, in ye county of North. Esq., who depect this life ye 10th: of March, 1622, after they lived lovingly: together many yeares in this parish. I have taken the trouble to have made for the Herald a "rubbing" of this inscription. It is roughly done by means of a lead-pencil rubbed over the brass, giving an exact copy. Below the inscription there is a brass shield, let into the stone, which has still greater interest for us, and of which I send you a copy. It represents the Washington family escutcheon—argent two bars gules; in chief three mullets of the second—as it is described in heraldic phraseology, the signification of which will be better understood in simpler language—namely, on a shield of silver (or white) two red bars, and in chief (the upper part of the shield) three stars, also red. In this shield, therefore, we have the origin of the national flag of America. Of course the emigrant would take the family escutcheon with him and hand it down to the family, and we have information to the effect that the stars and stripes were indeed copied from Washington's signet ring. The stripes of the Washington shield are alternate gules (red) on a white (silver) ground, as are those of the flag, and the "mullet" in chief have the parallel peculiarity of being five-pointed, while six points are sometimes known. The "mullet" in heraldry is a star of (generally) five points, and is always formed of straight lines, while the "estolle" is a star of six or more points, with wavy rays. The crescent in the center of the shield is the heraldic sign used by the second son of the family—the shield is that of Robert. Opium. Opium is the dried juice of the poppy. It is prepared in Asia Minor, Turkey, Egypt and India, in which country the poppy is cultivated for the exclusive purpose of making opium. It forms a staple commodity of many provinces in India, in which the following is the mode of treatment commonly used. It is an object of careful attention to keep the plants at a due distance from each other. If the seed happens to be thickly sown, some of the young plants are pulled up and used as pot-herbs, the leaves of which when boiled have a flavor of peas; but when they have attained eighteen inches in height, they are unfit for that use from their intoxicating nature. The plant flowers in February and the opium is extracted in March or April, according to the period of sowing. When the flowers have fallen and the capsules assume a whitish color, four or five incisions are made in them with a three-toothed instrument which is drawn from the top to the bottom. The incisions are always made in the evening, as the night-dews, by their moisture, favor the exhalation of the juice, and the opium is gathered next morning. The wounds in each capsule are repeated for three successive days, and in general, fifteen days suffice to gather all the opium in a field. From the incisions a milky juice exudes, which thickens upon exposure to the air, and is carefully scraped off with a shell, or a small iron instrument previously dipped in oil. It is afterward worked in an iron pot in the heat of the sun, until it is of a consistency to be formed into thick cakes of about four pounds weight. They are then covered with the leaves of the poppy or some other vegetable to prevent them sticking together, and in this condition they are dried and packed away for exportation.

Baby Faces. I passed a pretty cottage on my homeward path one night, And its windows glowed like crystal in the mellow evening light; And between the crimson curtains stood an infant bright and fair, With my own dear darling's hazel eyes and waving, sun-tipped hair. I paused to gaze upon him, and my heart was filled with woe At thought of my dear one lying 'neath the winter's frost and snow; And I longed to kiss the sweet lips that were pressed against the pane, For sake of the buried baby-lips that I never shall kiss again. Oh, babies with happy faces, and eyes so tender and true, May God in His mercy guide you life's devious windings through! May never a shadow of sorrow, and never a thought of guile, Chase the angel-light from your sunny eyes, nor darken your baby-smile! Items of Interest. A muddy country road is something to add mire. Sleight of hand—Refusing a charming young lady. A bonnet is a good scent-piece for the dinner-table. Sunflowers originally came from Peru, and were a sacred emblem with the devout. The highest navigable water on this continent is Chataqua lake, New York State. When the Arabs kill a hyena, they bury the head lest it should be used in a charm against them. "Do fishes go crazy?" is a conundrum proposed by Seth Green. Sometimes they get in seine. "A lie which is all a lie Can be met and fought with outright; But a lie which is half a lie Is a harder matter to fight." Chan Put Nam is the name of the Chinese consul general who is to watch over the interests of his countrymen in Israel. He is no relative to old Israel Put Nam. Aunt Prudence, in the Palaski Democrat, says: There is not a particle of satisfaction in telling a man he is a liar; for if he is he knows it, and if he isn't who does the lying? Birds build their nests in the seaweed, which grows and floats with the gulf stream, and in many instances are found a thousand miles from any land. This weed is sustained by pods grown upon it, which act as air floats. A German paper asserts that presic acid only causes suspension of life at first, and that one who takes it can be restored to animation by the pouring of acetate of potash and salt dissolved in water, on the head and spine. Rabbits have been so recovered. Three hundred and forty distinct species of humming birds have been classified. These little feathered creatures are found only in America and its islands. There are humming birds which, when stripped of their feathers, are no larger than a humble bee. A Complicated Case. Herr Bohren lived in Switzerland and married his wife. He afterward left both her and his native land and came to this country. The wife heard nothing from him until word came that he was dead. She then married Herr Zambrunn. But a few weeks ago Herr Bohren returned and claimed her for his wife. By the law of that country it was perfectly clear whether she was his wife or Herr Zambrunn's. Herr Zambrunn refused to give her up, and she refused to go. A lawsuit was begun, but while it was in progress, Herr Bohren armed himself with a pistol and shot his second husband in the arm and chest, wounding him seriously. Thus a curious situation may arise. A civil court is engaged in ascertaining to which of these two men this woman is legally wedded, and a criminal court will be occupied with the trial of her first husband for the attempted murder of his second. In the event of her being declared the wife of Bohren, and if, as is likely enough, he should be condemned to imprisonment for life, she will be in the unfortunate position of having lost her second husband, and found her first only to lose him, and without possibility of marrying another so long as the latter may live. The Humming of Telegraph Wires. As to the cause of the sounds frequently heard to proceed from telegraph wires in the open air, it has been customary to accept the wind—producing the sound by direct vibrations, similar to those of the Aeolian harp. A writer in an Australian journal, however, calls attention to the fact that one who gives close observation to both the wire and sounds will find that the latter make themselves obvious likewise when there is a total absence of wind; and in a quiet morning in winter, when the wires appear covered with frost to the thickness of the finger, they nevertheless carry on lively vibrations and swaying, while the air is totally quiet. According to this writer, therefore, the vibrations are due, not to the wind, but to the changes of atmospheric temperature, and especially a lowering of the temperature induces a shortening of the wires, extending over the whole length of the conductor. A considerable amount of friction is produced on the supporting bells, thus inducing sound both in the wires and the bells.