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After a While.

There is a strange, sweet voice in the thought
That all the world is suffering below
May, as a dark and hidden garment wrought
For to wear, whether it will or no,
No rest, no sleep, with nothing to smile,
After a little while.

No mortal feeling but this certain end
Though for years the ocean-spaces gray
We sail and sail, without a distant friend
Above the skyline, faint and far,
There looms at last the one enchanted land,
After a little while.

Oh, when our eyes come thronging thick and fast,
With more of anguish than the heart can bear,
Though friends, sweet, and, as the headdress
Even long years ago with a strong glare,
Let us withdraw from some remote place,
On lonely forest side.

And contemplate the never-ending change
Which the presence of God is working
And from our eyes, our souls are being
Till, hushed in currents of exalted thought,
We feel the rest that must our eyes beguile,
After a little while.

A Curious Disposition.

Three ladies were seated in Agatha Foster's parlor; Miss Fortescue, large, dark and of uncertain age, who monopolized the most comfortable arm-chair; Mrs. Becker, shrunken and sandy, who was constantly sliding off the sofa and reclining herself with a jerk; and Miss Agatha herself, who sat apart from the others, glancing uneasily out of the window, as if distressed by their garrulity. Miss Agatha was a fair young woman, with a noble head and a countenance expressive of all grace and goodness. Yet at this moment she entertained feelings decidedly hostile to her callers, who had run in, with the familiar freedom of fellow boarders in a family hotel, to chat away the afternoon. At heart they were immensely sorry that Miss Nannie Foster had not yet returned from a snub, where she had gone the day before. Miss Nannie, Agatha's cousin, companion and confidante in one, was more to their taste; she was more attentive, more easily impressed, more sympathetic, they thought. She sat looking out the window when they were retelling their choicest bits of scandal for her especial benefit. But then she was a woman of years. However, they still lingered; it was a pleasant place. The Fosters had the handsomest suite in the building—and furnished with such taste! Such carpet! Such decorative art! And the Fosters were tip-top people. There were four of them, Miss Agatha, her two bachelor brothers, ten and a dozen years her senior, and Miss Nannie, who, since their parents' death, had kept the children together. The winter day drew to a close, the room grew dusky, and still the ladies lingered.

Agatha could endure it no longer; this, of all days, she was without patience, she rose quickly.

"What?" she said, with an indignant quiver in her sweet contralto voice, "you must excuse me. I cannot listen to such conversation!"

There was silence a moment; then Miss Fortescue lifted her cumbersome frame. "Oh, certainly. I quite understand. We will withdraw. We do not wish to offend."

"Oh, certainly," faintly echoed Mrs. Becker, sliding from the sofa for the last time and preparing to follow.

Agatha's impatience only increased. "And allow me to say," she exclaimed, with no compunction, "that I think ladies might be better employed than with their neighbors' affairs."

"Good-afternoon," said Miss Fortescue, vaguely.

"Good-afternoon," sneered Mrs. Becker.

"Good afternoon!" cried Agatha, sharply, ere the door had closed.

"To-day of all days," she said, as she walked to and fro in the dusk. Presently the door opened.

"All in the dark, Agatha?" asked a cheery voice.

"I thought you would never come, Nannie," was the swift, unheeded reply.

"Why, what is the matter, my dear?"

"I have just put Mrs. Fortescue and Mrs. Becker out of the room, and it has annoyed me."

"Dear me, what had they done?"

"The same old sickening gossip. Miss Bruce sits on the street; Mrs. Gray holds her step-child to the fire to burn it, and so on and so on."

"They get their ideas from the morning papers," said Nannie, calmly, unheeding her fur-lined circular.

"The stepmother holding the child to the fire is a favorite paragraph when news is scarce. Sometimes she heats the flat-iron. For my part I would never go to that trouble."

But Agatha could not respond to her staid humor. She helped put away the wraps, and inquired after the suburban friends.

"You look pale; aren't you well?" asked Miss Nannie when they were seated.

until, after some moments, her cousin cleared her throat and tranquilly inquired: "Well, dear, are you satisfied that you will be happy?"

Then the girl rose and threw herself upon the sofa. "Oh, Nannie, I don't know; I can't tell."

More silence. Then Miss Nannie asked if she had told the boys.

To these women George and Lewis would be "the boys" as long as they lived.

"I told George at noon," replied Agatha, in a voice heavy with tears.

"Lewis was not here. I wish you would tell him."

"And what did George say?"

"He only said, 'I congratulate Peters.'"

Miss Nannie leaned back in the chair and meditated, bringing Peters up for mental review. Poor little whifflet! To be sure he had money, some social standing and a fair education. They had known him a long, long time, and even felt for him a sort of distant relative affection. They would do anything for him in the world for him. He often vexed Agatha about, to places of amusement, to church, or riding. But he was at least fifteen years her senior, and they had never dreamed of his aspiring to marry her. His appearance was pitifully against him. Miss Nannie reviewed his bad build, his bowed legs, his "wild eye," as she called it, a suspicious eye that seemed to skidish about the room while its mate regarded you with steadfast respect. Then she turned her thoughts to Agatha—Agatha perfect in face and figure and endowed by education and advantages—Agatha, for whom a senator had proposed and a congressman languished, so saying nothing of her lesser adorers—Agatha, who had rejected the senator because he lacked principle, and the congressman because he was a widower.

Nannie remembered that the girl had suffered and shed tears over refusing these and others. She had a curious disposition, as the boys had said.

At length Nannie roused and spoke. "I will tell Lewis; and now, dear, you had better dress, it is near dinner-time."

"Hark!" cried Agatha, "there he is now—gone into his room."

Nannie recognized the clumsy step, Lewis had never yet come up those stairs without tripping at the top; the rushing, impetuous way of his boyhood would always cling to him.

"I am going at once to tell him, before George comes," said Nannie, rising.

"Yes, do," sighed Agatha. And when her cousin had gone out across the corridor, and her tap had been welcomed by a careless "Come in!" the young girl stole after and listened at the crack of her brother's door.

"Lewis, I have news for you," said Nannie, gently, and there was a hidden sob in her fond voice. "Agatha has promised to marry Mr. Peters."

"Oh, Lord!" cried Lewis, in open-mouthed disgust.

Agatha crept away from the door; her face was burning and her heart beat hard.

But Miss Nannie remained awhile in her cousin's chamber.

"Lewis," she said, gently, "I suppose you feel the same over this matter?"

Agatha says when she told George he remarked that he congratulated Peters.

"Well, this is too bad," said Lewis, indignantly. "It is a shame if a girl with her face and brains can't do better. She is altogether too soft-hearted. She would have married all the men who ever proposed, if we had let her, and out of sheer pity, not because she cared for them. That is why she accepted Peters, couldn't bear to hurt his feelings—didn't want his eyes to suffuse with tears! We must do something to prevent."

Nannie smiled deprecatingly: "We must be very careful. Agatha has a curious disposition, and if she thought we were all against him she would only pity him the more."

"If there was only some way to dispose of him," exclaimed Lewis, grimly; "if we could send him out with the next Arctic expedition!"

Nannie rose. "You will be very careful what you say, Lewis?"

"Oh, of course."

She lingered at the door. "Agatha has not a forceless nature by any means," she said; "she can get angry if she cares to. She tells me she put Miss Fortescue and Mrs. Becker out of our parlor to-day, because of their vile gossip. I have no doubt she did."

"Humph!"

Agatha came down to dinner with her face composed and her manner gracious as ever. Her inward defiance was not outwardly manifest. Of her family, George was a shade more dignified than usual, and Lewis appeared annoyed, while Nannie put on a regretful look and sighed occasionally. When they left the dining-room, Agatha swept haughtily by the table, at which sat the Fortescues and Beckers. She was done with the twain and intended they should see it.

Up in their parlor, George sat down by his sister. "Agatha," he said, slowly and with an evident distaste for the subject, "do you think you did well to engage yourself to Mr. Peters before consulting your family?"

"I was of age three years ago," she said, regarding him with serene dignity.

"Yes, yes, of course. But there is such a thing as advice. Mr. Peters is our good friend, but is he a suitable husband for you?"

"What is there against him?" she asked, unflexibly. She was not blind to her lover's bodily imperfections. She had lain awake all night mentally endeavoring to straighten his crooked limbs and control his rampant orb. But with daylight they had dawned upon her as uncompromising as ever.

But George would not stoop to personalities. "Nothing," he answered, quietly. "Only we have looked very high for you. We want you to be happy."

"Then do not speak against Mr. Peters," she said, in a way that seemed to dismiss the subject.

George betook himself to his own room, and Lewis took his place by Agatha. "I suppose I am to congratulate," he said, with a careless disregard of Nannie's injunctions.

"You don't seem very enthusiastic," responded his sister, calmly, recalling his secretly-heard exclamation upon first learning the news.

"I can't help it if I don't," he answered, half impatiently. "You know how proud we are of you, Gath, and we can't be expected to think any man good enough."

She smiled.

He went on recklessly: "I don't believe you knew what you were doing. You don't love Peters, you only pity him, just as you used to pity the senator and all the rest. This crooked little curmudgeon! Why, he is older than George, and cross-eyed."

She sprang up in a rage: "Lewis, you have said quite enough. Never speak to me again. I forbid it!"

Then she sought her own chamber and threw herself upon the bed.

Nannie came to her after awhile. "My poor darling! Why are you feeling so bad?"

"Lewis has been saying such awful things!"

"And are you quite sure you have made no mistake?"

"Quite sure?"

She arose and arranged her toilet; Mr. Peters was to come that evening.

He arrived early. Nannie endeavored to be gracious, but excused herself, leaving Agatha to her lover, the boys having both gone out. And Agatha, with Lewis' cool criticism still ringing in her ears, felt as if in a dream. Fortunately Peters made no inquiries as to her brothers' opinions of the marriage. Miss Nannie had congratulated him as though all was satisfactory.

Agatha accepted his adoration quite passively, and at last, when he had gone, retired to her own room to pity him, and tell herself how much she loved him.

But as the winter slipped away the engagement was announced, and, having remained unbroken, Agatha's brothers even began to feel quite resigned.

The quiet, intense devotion of Norman Peters was touching. He worshipped his betrothed; to him she was a very goddess.

"If," thought Nannie, with a softened regret, "if he were only not quite so small! If he were only a half inch taller, to be of even height with Agatha!"

Meanwhile Agatha was fretting herself to death. A thousand little heartless sarcasms and glances of ridicule, to which Peters, in his great happiness, was utterly oblivious, were constantly stabbing her. Night after night she passed in wakeful agony, the idea of breaking the engagement never once occurring to her. She was sure she loved him, and she realized the depth of his devotion. She endeavored to rise above morbid sensitiveness, telling herself that people would cease their cruel ways when they saw that she was determined to stand by him. But she grew thin, and her face wore a hunted expression. Madames Becker and Fortescue now began to circulate petty little stories about her—ingeniously constructed, but untruthful romances.

Nothing very bad, for Agatha was a woman to whom no doubtful mist clung for a moment; but whispers of "coquetry," "girlish folly," and "a resort," which were blown from lip to lip on the dubious breath of friendship, came at last to the ears of the Fosters. Agatha only grew more pale. Stormy Lewis, however, one day confronted Miss Fortescue in the hall before his sister's room.

"I can tell you, madame, that you must discontinue your talk of my sister," he cried, angrily.

Agatha came out. "Oh, Lewis, dear!"

He took her by the arm. "Go back, Gath. I've a matter to settle with this lady. She knows what mischief she has been trying to work, and I intend the talk shall cease, or I shall take measures she may not admire."

Without a word Mrs. Fortescue turned and fled.

"I was sorry for her," said Agatha; "she looked so guilty and helpless."

"I declare I haven't much patience with you," exclaimed her brother, "to think that you would defend her, and she every day assailing your good name. But all your ways of late are

provoking. You are going to marry a man you don't love, because you pity him. For God's sake, why didn't you pity some one suitable?"

She trembled with excitement and passion.

"Lewis, if you have the least particle of love or respect for me, you will never speak so again. I do love Norman, and it will kill me if anything should break the engagement!"

Lewis quit her presence crestfallen. The days slipped by. There had been no date fixed for the wedding, nor was the subject discussed by the family.

None but Nannie knew the terrible tremor in which the girl existed. She was moving about, her hands constantly occupied. Day after day, rain or shine, the two women were out of doors. They had always an errand, usually one of mercy. Nannie, however disinclined, would have felt it a sin to oppose, and so Agatha dragged her off through the fitting sunshine, the moodiness, the chill, or the storm of the springtime, until one last morning.

It had been raining for three days, and so steadily that the sidewalk flags were cleaned and whitened.

Agatha said they would not be hampered with a carriage, and they took a car for a mile or so, alighting to walk a few squares to another line. The storm had abated, and the rain was but a listless drizzle.

Agatha slipped and slid once, and Nannie gave a frightened exclamation.

"My overshoes are useless," said the girl, carelessly. "I must have another pair. I have a good deal of shopping to do soon."

"Your outfit—" ventured Nannie, and stopped.

Agatha sighed, but the sigh was lost in the noise of the street.

A poor little yellow dog limped out from under a passing vehicle, holding up one paw and yelping pitifully.

"Oh, see," cried Agatha, with her eyes wet. "Poor, poor doggie! I am so sorry!"

The yelps died away in the distance, and the ladies went on.

A blind man crying "Cough lozenges?" upon the corner detained them for a moment.

In the next block an old building had been torn away to give place to a new one. Careless workmen had left the sidewalk unguarded in one place, a step from which would have landed one in a deep cellar, where lay a number of loose foundation stones.

Just as they had reached this spot they were brought to a sudden halt by loud cries and confusion. Down the street, and directly toward them, came a runaway team dragging a splendid carriage.

Agatha took an irresolute step forward, and then sprang back as the horses dashed up against the sidewalk.

The women were thus separated, and in a second Nannie was reaching forward, cold with horror.

"Agatha!" she cried, but too late. The girl had lost her balance, and had fallen backward from the unguarded sidewalk down into the deep cellar, and there lay upon the stones limp and unconscious.

She would live, sadly crippled and helpless; the spine had been injured and one hip dislocated. So said the best of surgeons. She would henceforth require all care and tenderness.

"Thank God she is not poor!" cried Nannie. As for the boys, George was completely crushed, and Lewis paced the floor for hours, crying for his "Poor, poor sister!"

Agatha insisted upon hearing the worst, and when it was made known, was silent. By-and-by Nannie could see great tears trembling under the long, dark eyelashes.

"I would not mind," faltered the sufferer, "but for him. Who will love and care for him now?"

Then she asked that he be sent for at once. When he arrived Nannie and the boys were in the room, but they withdrew to the window. Peters' face was as pale as Agatha's own.

"Norman, dear," she said, without a preface, "I am a cripple for life. I may never walk again. I sent for you—to give you back your freedom."

A frightened expression overspread his countenance; his lip quivered, and he sank on his knees by the bed and buried his face.

"Agatha, darling!" he cried, with real pathos, "don't, don't cast me off! You are a thousand times dearer to me now. All I ask is the right to care for you"—his voice broke, and he fell to weeping.

By the window three persons heard it all. They looked in silence at each other, then Lewis strode swiftly across the room.

"Peters," he said, "we haven't done right by you. I, myself, have acted despicably. But if you will forgive and forget, it will be very different in the future."

Then Peters, who had risen, stood silent and bewildered till, through the mist, a golden glow suddenly bright, for they had entered him with sudden warmth. And as Agatha lay watching she raised a feeble hand to stay the tears that coursed her cheeks.

"Never thought," she sobbed aloud, "I never dreamed I could be so happy!"

SCIENTIFIC NOTES.

A French paper says: "It is a remarkable fact that there are no rats in the islands of the Pacific ocean. Repeated attempts have been made to acclimatize the rodents there, as the flesh is much esteemed by the natives as an article of food. But the attempts thus far have failed, as they invariably die of consumption."

Among the instruments at a recent scientific meeting was one exhibited by Sir F. Bramwell, employed for ascertaining the velocity of trains and the efficiency of brakes. With this apparatus it was found that a train weighing 125 tons ran five miles five yards after steam was shut off while traveling at a speed of forty-five miles an hour. The line was level and the day perfectly calm.

Sensations are transmitted to the brain at a rapidity of about 180 feet per second, or at one-fifth the rate of sound; and this is nearly the same in all individuals. The brain requires one-tenth of a second to transmit its orders to the nerves which preside over voluntary motion; but this amount varies much in different individuals, and in the same individual at different times, according to the disposition or condition at the time, and is more regular the more sustained the attention.

Experiments upon over four hundred individuals of all classes, ages and occupations show how great is the diversity of opinion as to the size of objects seen through the microscope. The object used in the experiments was a common house magnified to a theoretical size of 4.66 inches. The majority of observers underestimated this value; two estimates were only one inch; seven were over a foot, and one was at least five feet. New students of the microscope usually receive an impression somewhat larger than the real value, and adhere to it for a considerable time.

Dr. Mittendorf states that American students are less afflicted with near-sightedness than German students. The affection is developed by sedentary occupations and lack of exercise, women being therefore more liable to contract it than men. It usually appears in childhood, rarely after the twenty-first year. Weak glasses of slight blue tint should be worn early to stay its progress, as blindness often follows neglect of treatment. In his paper on this subject Dr. M. tells of a fine horse in Berlin which became intractable and was found to be suffering from near-sightedness, but was as docile as ever after a pair of glasses had been fitted to its eyes.

HEALTH HINTS.

Eat lightly at supper, retire early and eat a hearty breakfast, if you would keep a clean tongue and a good appetite.—*Dr. Foote's Health Monthly.*

To remove warts, cover them with baking soda, wet with water and tie them up; a few applications will remove them. I have tried it.—*Cottage Health.*

For a tight, hoarse cough, where phlegm is not raised, or with difficulty, take hot water often—as hot as can be sipped. This will give immediate and permanent relief. Don't fail to try this remedy because it is simple.

Dr. Denker, of St. Petersburg, treats diphtheria by first giving the patient a laxative, and when its operation has ceased he gives cold drinks acidulated with hydrochloric acid and a gargle of lime-water and hot milk in equal parts every two hours. His method has been very successful.

Careful cooking of even the longest used and best known kinds of food, whether animal or vegetable, is the important rule to insure health and strength from the table. No matter what the quality of the food to begin with may be, a bad cook will invariably incur heavy doctors' bills and a not less considerable "little account" at the druggist's.

Treatment of Frozen Persons.

Medical men have always differed as to whether the best medical treatment of frozen persons was by a gradual or a rapid application of heat. To settle the matter, says *Knowledge*, "Lapchinski has made a series of very careful experiments upon dogs, with the following results: Of twenty animals treated by the method of gradual resuscitation in a cold room, fourteen perished; of twenty placed at once in a warm apartment, eight died; while of twenty immediately put into a hot bath, all recovered." The experiments will probably influence the practice of medical men in Russia and Northern Europe, where the question of the best means of restoring life in persons suffering from excessive cold is of frequent occurrence every winter.

Anglers predict that in a very few years the trout will all disappear from the valley streams of Montana, owing to the immense numbers carried out into irrigating ditches and into the fields.

Paris scientists have succeeded in inoculating a mule with smallpox. It is a wonder the mule didn't kick against it.

In the Mining Town.

"Tis the last time, darling," he gently said, As he kissed her lips, like cherries red, While a fond look shone in his eyes of brown. "My own is the prettiest girl in town: To-morrow the bell from the tower will ring A joyful peal. Was there ever a king So truly blent on his royal throne, As I shall be, when I claim my own?"

'Twas a fond farewell; 'twas a sweet goodbye! But she watched him go, with a troubled sigh; So into the basket, that awayed and swung O'er the yawning abyss, he lightly sprung, And the joy of heart seemed turned to woe As they lowered him into the depths below. Her sweet young face, with its tresses brown, Was the fairest face in the mining town.

Lo! the morning came; but the marriage bell, High up in the tower, rang a mourning knell For the true heart buried 'neath earth and stone, Far down in the heart of the mine—alone, A sorrow-peal on her wedding day, For the breaking heart, and the heart of clay; And the face that looked from her tresses brown Was the saddest face in the mining town.

Thus time rolled on in its weary way, Until fifty years with their shadows gray Had darkened the light of her sweet eyes' glow, And had turned the brown of her hair to snow.

Oh! never a kiss from a husband's lips Or the clasp of a child's sweet finger-tips, Had lifted one moment the shadows brown From the saddest heart in the mining town.

Far down in the depths of the mine one day, In the loosened earth they were digging away, They discovered a face, so young, so fair— From the smiling life to the bright-brown hair—

Untouched by the finger of time's decay, When they drew him up to the light of day, The wondering people gathered round To gaze at the man so strangely found.

Then a woman sprang from among the crowd, With her long white hair, and her slight form bowed; She silently knelt by the form of clay, And kissed the lips that were cold and gray.

Then the sad old face, with its snowy hair, On his youthful bosom lay pillowed there. He had found her at last—his waiting bride; And the people buried them side by side.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

"Never smoke before ladies." We suppose one must let the ladies smoke first.—*Lawrence American.*

Corn is said to be late in ripening, but when a fellow trades on your foot you will find your corn is ripe, and yell oh!

"Where are the men of 76?" shrieks an excited exchange. Oh, to Halifax with the men of seventy-six. Give us the women of twenty-three.—*Hawkeye.*

Who has any right to sneer at the inventive genius of woman when one in New York has discovered a process by which cat skin can be made to look like seal?—*Detroit Free Press.*

A man in Elgin, Illinois, put on a clean shirt with such energy the other day that he broke an arm. It is a duty which one likes to have off his mind as soon as possible.—*Free Press.*

Typhoid fever is now the fashionable disease. Having it is prima facie evidence that you are in easy circumstances and passed the season at a summer resort.—*Philadelphia News.*

A man never realizes the littleness of his own abilities so much as when, after blacking his own boots, he is greeted by the first boy he meets with the customary "Shine?"—*Lowell Citizen.*

Several of our exchanges are devoting considerable space to the importance of "cooking girls." It's no use. We don't want them cooked. The raw damsel is good enough for us.—*Hartford Times.*

Mrs. Partington honored us with a call this morning. She is looking well, and she says she is like the windows of a renovated house—all the old panes are out of her, and the pneumatics are things of the past.—*Boston Star.*

"Pa, I'll be right sorry when you get well," said a little Austin boy to his sick parent. "Why, my son?" "Because I won't get any more empty medicine bottles to sell. I sell 'em for five cents apiece to the drug store."—*Siftings.*

"Few men are born to rule," and that is what the bookkeeper thinks when he comes in after lunch and finds the old man has been trying to close an account on the ledger with a spattering pen and a nickel ruler.—*Boston Bulletin.*

In the German army more attention is being paid to the science of aerostatics, and officers are being trained to make balloon ascensions. This will fit them to come to this country and annex the population on the Fourth of July.—*Boston Post.*

A New York man says he keeps chops and steaks for several days in the hottest weather by burying them in meat. Meat is a good thing in any weather for steaks and chops. We more particularly refer just now to the morning meal.—*Danbury News.*