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BY MOORE & THOMPSON.

TO BE IN THE

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SUPERSTITION;

Or, The Cat with the Eyes.

BY BROADBENT W. TWYMAN.

His life began in woo, but closed in joy.—Byron.

Returning from morning prayers in one of our western colleges, (which at present shall be nameless,) I called at the post office to inquire if any letters had arrived for me in the last mail. There was none. I turned, and was about to pass on, when my attention was arrested by the sudden blaze of joy which seemed to light up the countenance of a young man, who had been remarkable, throughout the session, for his dejected and melancholy aspect and lonely habits.

You must have good news there, Alfred, said I.

Yes, Frank, by Jove! news of the best kind, was his reply.

I am glad to see you in such fine humor to-day; come, walk down to my room, and as I spoke, I took hold of his arm.

No, thank you. I must go and answer this letter, for it demands an immediate reply, was his response.

Well, but do you suppose I have no paper and ink in my room? no excuse, you shall go, and as I said this, I started off, using a little force to get him along.

Well, Frank, I will go and bore you with a long account of my past life, for I can trust you, answered he, at the same time falling into one of his gloomy reveries—suddenly brightening up, he continued, and I want you to rejoice with me in my prospects for future happiness.

Wondering what he meant by this remark, I walked on in silence until we reached the hotel at which I boarded; stopping in the bar long enough for me to order some wood, we passed up to my room, upon entering which, he immediately took a seat, drew the letter from his bosom and commenced a perusal of it.—I said nothing until the servant had brought wood, laid it on, swept the hearth and left the room.

Alfred, that letter must be from one of the fair sex; else why did you lay it so close to your heart when we started down here?

Not from one, but about one, was his answer.

Will you write now? said I, handing him paper.

No, let your paper be. I will wait until I return to my own room. And now, Frank, he continued, having noticed for some time that you have a great anxiety to know the cause of my being so pensive, and what makes me spend so much of my time alone, I will tell you; but in so doing will be compelled to refer to the days of my youth—those days during which I enjoyed the only happiness that I have ever experienced.

I am the younger of two children of wealthy, respectable and influential parents. My sister is some three or four years older than I. Without saying anything of my infancy, I will pass on to that period of my life at which I entered the tenth year of my age. My sister, about that time, commenced boarding in a small town, near which my father resided, for the purpose of attending a large female academy, which was then conducted by the celebrated Mrs. Parker—while I entered a school on the outskirts of my father's farm, and about a mile from the house.

A circumstance occurred about this time which has had a considerable bearing on the succeeding portion of my life, and therefore I will relate it before I proceed further with my story. The black girl, who, when my sister was at home, acted the part of her maid, had in my infancy been my nurse—and (as all such generally are) was in the habit of speaking to me with more freedom than any other servant about the place.

Shortly after I commenced going to school, the daughter of one of our nearest neighbors also entered, and as chance would have it was put into my class.—Ellen Rainey was the name of this beautiful girl—for beautiful she was in the highest degree.

She was endowed with a rich, dark brunette complexion—a pair of the most brilliant, sparkling black eyes that ever was seen—glowing raven hair, and a form as exquisitely rounded as any upon which the admiring glance of a connoisseur ever rested.

Frank you may call it puppy love, or what you please, but I loved with all the ardor of which my young heart was capable; and never yet have I ceased to love her.

During my attendance at school I had often heard those students who were studying the classics, describe the manner in which the ancient Romans sacrificed previous to engaging in battle; and so I conceived the notion of offering a sacrifice to the gods to induce them to favour me in my love for Ellen. Accordingly, on the first Saturday, I tried my hand on an

old cat, which had often frightened me by coming into my chamber during the night; when I was afraid to get up and put her out. But instead of striking her with a flat stone, I concluded that she deserved the more disgraceful death of hanging. Taking her out behind the house, I hoisted her up, tied the rope to the limb of a tree hard by, and was proceeding to scorch her with a shovel of coals which I had carried along, that I might have the pleasure (pleasure, Frank!) of seeing her kick, when Nancy (the black nurse, of whom I spoke a moment since) having heard me laugh, came upon me.

Good Lord! Mans Alfud, I hope you no gwine kill dat cat—why you never had good luck gin in the world. Why cat got many lives, and sure as eber you kill dat cat, you hab bad luck—bad luck all your life.

How many lives has she, Nan? asked I.

Five, Mans Alfud, and you gwine hab five great misfortunes happen to you fore you die.

Wicked and full of mischief as I was, her words made an impression on my mind; and I immediately cut poor puss down, but the vital spark was extinct; so there remained nothing more for me to do, so far as she was concerned, but to drag her off to the orchard and bury her—shall I say, Frank, with the honors of war?

That night I dreamt of old Tab, and a horrible dream it was. I recollect telling my parents, whom I had awakened by screaming; that I had dreamt the old cat which I hung the morning before was scratching my eyes out. I remained in that school until I was sixteen, at which time I left for college, after having exchanged mutual vows of consistency with the blue-eyed Ellen.

The morning on which I left home, Nancy, the black girl, must needs come to the door as I started away, and cry out, Now, Mans Alfud, you gwine out in the world, your bad luck gwine begin, cause you hang old Tab.

Oh, no, Nancy, I hope not, said I, as I drove off.

I remained in college about eighteen months, pursuing the usual studies incumbent upon a regular freshman and sophomore, when unexpectedly I was summoned home to witness the consummation of my sister's nuptials. She was to be married to a young lawyer, Charles Grandison, who had lately settled in the town in which she had attended the academy. I which she had attended the academy, I embraced this opportunity of seeing home and 'homefolks,' with the greatest imaginable pleasure. I started forthwith, and arrived there the day before the marriage was to take place. My sister met me at the gate with an Oh, Alfred! I am so glad to see you—good gracious, how you have grown—why, you will soon want to marry, yourself—and if you do, I have brought the very girl for you.

Who is she? said I.

Sarah Hunter. She is the prettiest girl you have ever seen; oh! I know you will love her, Alfred.

I walked in, and after undergoing the usual embrace of my mother, and the well, and how are you, my boy? of my father, retired to my room to dress.

At supper I was introduced to Miss Hunter, who, owing to the fact that she was to be bridesmaid, was spending a few days with my sister previous to the wedding, for the purpose of making the necessary preparations. She was the very antipodes (if I may so speak,) of Ellen Rainey. A tall and slender form, deep blue eyes, a milk-white skin and golden hair secured to her the appellation of the 'white lady.'

Her father had been wealthy, but owing to bad management had lost most of his property, and was now what some folks call 'broken down quality,' having lost his wife, and three out of four children, (who knows Frank but that he killed a cat in his young days,) he indulged Sarah in every extravagance of which his circumstances would admit. During the evening, while my father was relating the circumstance of old Tab's death, I turned to Nancy, who stood near me, and said,

Well, Nancy, no bad luck yet?

Never mind, Mans Alfud, said she, you done come home now, your bad luck gwine begin.

I said nothing, but walked into the porch, where she followed me, saying, Your bad luck done begin, Mans Alfud; cause I see eber you make quittance long that Miss Sary Hunter you gwine forgit that Miss Ellen Rainey? Ah! Mans Alfud, I seed her dis morning, she asked me was you coming home to de wedding, and den want to know if you eber write to your ma and sister.

How thunderstruck I was! In the speaking and visiting, and the other things attendant upon a student's life, I had but once written to Ellen, and she, I thought, would never forgive me for it. But how vastly I was mistaken! When I called the next morning she merely said, that she supposed I was busy with my studies, and that she could hardly expect me to write when she had refused to answer my letters; and that she had done because she thought it imprudent in a young lady to correspond with a gentleman. She forgave me, and we entered into a positive engagement to marry as soon as I left col-

lege; but she could not be induced to consent to correspond with me.

When I returned home I was immediately attacked by Miss Hunter and my sister, with having forsaken them, to call upon the rustic fair one, Miss Nelly Rainey, and I was fool enough to be ashamed of it; so much so that at night, when the company assembled I avoided her and attached myself almost exclusively to Sarah Hunter, for fear of a repetition of the morning scene.

I saw my sister married, and felt that in being united to Mr. Grandison she had secured to herself a man in every way worthy of her, and to me a warm friend and brother. Thus far I was happy; but when I retired for the night and reflected how I had neglected Ellen, my conscience smote me, and then did I feel that one of the misfortunes foretold by Nancy had come upon me when I became acquainted with Sarah Hunter. But her bland and captivating manners soon banished all such thoughts from my mind; and when I was about returning to college, she, so far from being as scrupulous as Ellen, came forward and requested me to correspond with her—saying, that nothing would afford her so much pleasure as the reception of a letter from the brother of her dear friend Mrs. Grandison.

I resumed my studies under a great depression of spirits, but it was soon worn off by the letters of my sister, in which she spoke in the most rapturous terms of her happiness; all of which she attributed to the kindness of her husband, and the company of her friend Sarah, who spent the most of her time with her. Corresponding regularly with Sarah, I was constantly thinking of her, and finally, persuaded by her warm expressions of friendship, and the earnest solicitations of my sister, whose anxiety to see her brother well married induced her to urge the claims of Miss Hunter upon me.—I finally broached the subject in one of my letters to Sarah, to which I received an immediate response, with the warm assurances of reciprocated love and an acceptance of my addresses. The consequence of which was a letter from me to my father, requesting leave to obtain a dismissal from college forthwith and return home; for you know, Frank, that whenever a man feels that he is doing wrong, he is always in a most prodigious hurry to get through with it. He was violently opposed to it, and after persuading, and finding that it did no good, finally commanded me to remain where I was until I had finished my course. In two days after the reception of that letter, I received one from Mr. Grandison, my brother-in-law, requiring my presence at home immediately to see my father die, as he had been thrown from his horse and so badly wounded that there were no hopes entertained of his recovery.

I arrived just in time to receive his last breath, and witness the heart-breaking anguish of my mother and sister. After his burial, my mother was very anxious that I should leave college and live with her, accordingly returned, obtained a dismissal, and departed with all my books and clothing. Being now in the nineteenth year of my age I commenced studying law with Mr. Grandison, and attending a Lyceum which the young men of the town in which he lived had formed. Recollect Frank, that at this time I was engaged to both Ellen Rainey and Sarah Hunter.

Returning home the morning after one of our debates, I fell in with Ellen Rainey passing from a neighbour's house to her father's. She had heard of my engagement to Sarah Hunter, and consequently there was a mutual embarrassment when we met.

Miss Ellen, said I, (and my conscience smote me when I called her Miss, for I had always called her Elly,) do you recollect a conversation which passed between us the morning of the day on which my sister was married?

I do, was her reply.

Then you recollect that we engaged ourselves to be married?

Yes.

Owing to some circumstances, of which I presume you are aware, I think it proper for that engagement to be broken and forgotten by both of us, was my rejoinder.

If it is your desire, Alfred, it shall certainly be so, was her mild reply.

Frank I loved her at that moment better than any human being in existence—did I not kill a cat, and my destiny was fixed! And this breaking with Ellen I call the third great misfortune that was to happen to me, as foretold by Nancy.

After my father had been dead about six months I was married to Sarah Hunter, being at the time about nineteen years of age. She was eighteen. At the wedding I saw Ellen; she advanced with trepidation to congratulate us, and I could see her lips quiver as she spoke, but she succeeded in wishing us all the happiness this world could afford, and then turned and left us. On the next day we went to a party at my mother's, and there I again met with Nancy.

Well, Mans Alfud, and so you wouldn't marry Miss Ellen Rainey?

May be she would not have had me if I had asked her, Nancy.

Don't tell me dat, I know you loved her and she loved you, and she loves you yet, don't I know how she looked when I

went over dar to carry her ticket to de party?

After the company had dispersed, and we all had retired for the night, who should disturb us but Nancy, poking her head in the door to know 'if we wanted anything.' We did not, but scarcely had she gone, when we heard a cat in the room. I always believed that the negro put the cat in, when she came to the door, I got up and kicked it out. The next morning the first thing Nancy said, when I went down was—

Well, Mans Alfud, I told you when you hang old Tab you was gwine have five great misfortunes happen to you fore you die. You done hab four, but the next one gwine be de greatest of all, cause tis de last; you see, she continued, when you make quittance wid Miss Sary, I call dat one, den when master die, dat two, den when you break wid Miss Ellen, dat three.

How do you know I broke with Ellen? said I.

Why you see when I went over dar to carry her ticket, I hears her mother ax her, when she seed you, and she say, two weeks ago las Saturday, as you come from town, den I knowed you done hab a talking—but I say marryin, Miss Sary make four troubles, and there be one more to come.

Nancy, said I, you are never to mention that cat to me again.

Five months passed away after my marriage without anything taking place more than the fact that I, as well as my sister and mother, found out that in marrying Sarah Hunter, I had indeed brought upon myself a grievous misfortune.

Some months previous to a very wild, Sarah had been addressed by a very wild, dissipated young man, whose name was Henry Carlton, who after our marriage began to pay very particular attention to her; so much so that I remonstrated with Sarah against the encouragement she gave him, but she only answered me with a contemptuous smile that if I wished to retaliate I could do so by paying my devoirs to my old flame Miss Ellen Rainey. Stung to the heart I left her, and telling my sister [at whose house we then were] that I would be back the next day to dinner, mounted my horse and rode rapidly out to my mother's. Upon entering the house, the cat which was in the habit of lying before the fire, got up and commenced rubbing her head against my foot.—I kicked her out, where she was received by Nancy with this consolation, 'Never mind, puss, you mus forgive Mans Alfud now, he is in trouble.'

The next morning when I was about to return to the town, I saw my sister and her husband riding up the lawn which leads from the main road up to my mother's house. Frank Bledsoe! imagine my feelings when I was told that they had eloped the night before with Henry Carlton. I threw myself on the ground cursing in bitterness of heart the day on which I became acquainted with Sarah Hunter, and invoking on their heads the vengeful thunder of the God of justice. While in this paroxysm of anguish and despair, Nancy passed and exclaimed, Oh! Mans Alfud I am so sorry Miss Sary would run off cause she is your wife and will disgrace you—but I do reckon you will never kill another cat.' Mr. Grandison angrily ordered her away, and tried to comfort me.

Here my friend ceased for some moments and covered his face with his hands. Upon recovering himself he resumed.

I immediately drew up a petition for a divorce and sent it to the legislature, which was then in session; but before a bill granting my petition could be passed, the news came that Sarah and Carlton had quarrelled—that she had secretly assassinated him, and then committed suicide by swallowing arsenic. Her father died in a few weeks of a broken heart; Carlton had no friends in the state, and so had no one to mourn his tragic and untimely end.

Three months afterward I heard that the session at this place was about to commence and came here, more to wear off the impression of that unfortunate occurrence than to reap any advantage by attending the college. And now, Frank, you know the cause of my dejected appearance and lonely habits since I have been here.

Two weeks ago I wrote to my sister that I wanted her to see Ellen Rainey, and in some manner to ascertain if it would be worth my while to address her. This, said he, taking the letter from his bosom, is her answer, in which she informs me that she has seen Ellen, and believes that she will marry me. And now listen, on the very night on which this letter was written I was aroused by a dog barking at my door. I went out and found that he had dug a cat up a tree after, having bit her very severely. I drove him off, took the cat into my room, kept her there until morning, and then turned her out, and now I believe the curse has passed from me. But I must go and write not to my sister, but to Ellen herself. Good morning.

After she had gone I sat and wondered to myself if a man with such a mind as his could possibly be so superstitious.

A week afterward as I was sitting in my room, he came absolutely running in

and grasping my hand shook it very stiff, exclaiming, 'Rejoice with me, Frank; I have a letter from Ellen—she says she will marry me, and I want you to go and wait upon me. In three days you must be ready.'

I went and saw them married, nor could I refrain from asking myself as they stood upon the floor, if it were possible that there ever lived a girl who could have been preferred to that beautiful, angelic creature before me.

It has now been five or six months since I saw my friend binned to the girl of his heart, during which time I have heard from him frequently; the last letter I received came to hand this morning, which I beg leave to insert in conclusion.

Dear Frank, I am still as happy as mortal man can be. If you do not believe me, come and see for yourself. My mother thinks that Ellen is an angel, and I am sure she is half right. All parties are now happy, and I am so anxious for you to partake of it, that if you will come and spend your vacation with us, you shall have a large party given you at Mr. Grandison's. Ellen joins me in the request. My respects to all acquaintances, and believe me as ever your true friend, A. C. Carlton.

P. S. If I am ever blessed with a son, you may rest assured that the first thing I will impress upon his youthful mind will be—

THAT HE MUST NEVER KILL A CAT.

Atlantic & Pacific Rail Road.

LETTER FROM MR. WINSTON. The Philadelphia Ledger has received the following letter from Mr. Winston, proprietor of the Atlantic & Pacific Rail Road.

St. Louis, Sept. 20, 1845.

To the Editors of the Ledger, Philadelphia: GENTLEMEN:—We arrived here last evening in the steamboat John Golong, from Ft. Leavenworth, having sailed on the mighty river 31 days; and navigating 1,000 miles—750 in a log canoe, the balance in steamboats. We are all well.

My last letters were dated at Prairie Du Chien about the 1st of July, at which I expected a guide to the Missouri, was disappointed, and again at Fort Atkinson, 50 miles west of the Mississippi, through Colonel Wilson and Major Dearborn, and the Indian Agent did all in their power to aid me. I am under much obligation for their kindness and civilities. This situated, without a guide, and but one laboring man, our number small, (but seven in all,) I felt a heavy responsibility and did small reluctance to leading the young gentlemen with me into probable dangers and certain hardships & fatigues, an unknown wilderness before us, and probably a hostile savage foe to watch our every step; but the young men, to a man, said, go on—we will follow you—we cannot turn back; and they have fully and manfully redeemed their pledge, having gone through many hardships, much fatigue, hard labor, hunger and thirst. I cannot say too much for them, nor can too much praise be awarded for their labor and conduct. Used to any labor, I feared it would go hard with them, but they never flinched; they were ready to wade through mud, water and grass to their necks, with our provisions upon their heads—to swim rivers—to fell trees for bridges and all other fatigues necessary for the accomplishment of our object. I am thus particular, because I feel it due to them & their friends.

Before leaving Prairie Du Chien, I fixed upon a route I would like to pass to the Missouri, and with compass in hand, made it within five miles of the place started for. By Burr's Map of Wisconsin, embracing Iowa, &c., (which I found more correct than any I have seen,) we crossed the Turkey river, at Fort Atkinson, North lat.—1 deg. 15 min.—thence we crossed the different branches of the Wabipinitia and the Cedars in about the same latitude to Clear Lake, in West long. 92 deg. 25 min; thence Northwesterly until we came to a branch of the St. Peter's, running Northwesterly. I will here remark that we did not find the Cedar's or St. Peter's any branch to correspond with Burr's map. I have seen. Thence due west to the Des Moines, in lat. 34 deg. 27 min; and west long. 95 deg; which streams we crossed by felling trees for a bridge.

Thence due west to a number of small beautiful lakes forming the head waters of the little Sioux and emptying into the Missouri; thence across Floyd's river; thence due west across the branches of the Calumet; thence to the Whitestone or Vermilion; thence to Jacques, and thence to the great bend, making a distance from the Mississippi of over 500 miles; over the finest country upon the globe capable of sustaining three times the population of the same space in any other part of the world; no swamps, no marshes, no flooding of rivers; except in the vicinity of the Wabipinitia, and then only a small distance, and undoubtedly the most healthy country in the world.

I have never found an atmosphere so pure; the sun is gently glowing to us all most level, always, however, undulating enough to throw the water off. While on this subject I will remark that none of the rivers, west of the great bend, have any great rivers, but have formed in the valleys and beds by the constant wash of the vast