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THE FOUNTAIN OF TEARS.

If you go over desert and mountain,
Far into the country of sorrow,
To-day, and to-morrow,
And may be for months and for years;
You shall come with a heart that is bursting
For trouble, and toiling, and thirsting,
You shall certainly come to the fountain
At length—to the Fountain of Tears.

Very peaceful the place is, and so,
For persons lamenting and sighing,
And those who come living or dying,
Able from their bosoms and their fears,
Full of grief—like shadows the place is,
And statues that cover their faces;
But out of the gloom springs the holy
And beautiful Fountain of Tears.

And it flows, and it flows with a motion
So gentle, and lovely, and lifeless,
And murmurs a tune so resistless,
To him who hath suffered and wept,
You shall surely, and with a word spoken,
Kneel down there and know your heart broken,
And yield to the long-continued emotion
That day by day the Fountain of Tears.

APPLES.

Madam sat in the sunny window
Sewing, the needle twinkled in her
rapid fingers, and the scarlet stuff she
stitched, glittering in the sunlight, shed
a reflected lustre on her black hair, her
tintless face, the bits of coral in her
well-set ears.

A high window this, into which the
sunlight streaming illumines the sinner
—very high—the topmost in the rambling,
jambuling, weedy old tenement.

Madam prefers to be on the top
story, she says. One is there away
from the dust and noise of the street.
Also, it costs less. Also, she will tell
you gaily, she can see the tops of the
sails, and the sun-lit masts of the ships
that come and go at the wharves, to-
ward which this dingy street looks
down. The ships bring wealth and
plenty to somebody. Some of them
come from France. Ah, beautiful
France! It is like being a poet, or hav-
ing a fine imagination, to own a win-
dow one can see the world out of.

Should any one pity madam or offer
sympathy, she will shrug her
shoulders magnificently, spread out
her hands, and say: "What will you?"
glancing toward her window as though
the world were at her feet. Has she
not her sunshine, her sewing, and her
little Fifiue, who fits up and down the
ladder-like stairs like a butterfly? Fi-
fine has black eyes and a dancing
smile. Fifiue is madam's poem, her
princess; she does not know poverty.
They had been poor in Paris, but Fifiue
had never gone hungry, and she had
many things in Paris, but Fifiue had
always her gay frilled dresses and her
tiny polished slippers. Was not her
father a professor? Was not her mother
a lady? Should they, then, associate on
equal terms with that degraded and de-
grading thing called poverty? Nay,
indeed! It might own the house, but it
should not sit at the board.

It was poverty that had driven this
family, thoughtlessly thoughtful, to
America. Prof. Pierre would come
here and teach the people French. It
was a wide country, a roomy country,
and the people needed education. Prof.
Pierre set sail and died on the passage.

"Ah, but he was a scholar!" says
madam, sighing. "If he had lived
(madam's English is not quite so per-
fect as her French). "We shall by this
time have the little *maison champêtre*,
the pretty place in the country, and
the little school, which we have talk
and dream of so much in Paris. For
there is much room in America—ah, so
much of room!"

She says madam, looking down on
the dingy, crowded street and the
swarming tenements.

She looks up, smiling from her work,
as a light footstep comes flying along
the ladder-like stair.

"So come the angels!" said madam,
devoutly, as Fifiue dances in. She has
her tiny apron full of red apples, which
tumble and roll out upon the floor.
"Madam, your madam's madam's scarlet
sewing, seems to recognize the ripe
round fruit, and glows anew at having
met it elsewhere in sweet familiar or-
chards and on stony slopes of far-away
hills.

"All for you, madam," cries Fifiue,
looking down on the treasure. "And
oh! madam, he will give me a ride in
the great wagon out to the beautiful
country and the little old mother!"
Madam's cheeks flush, her eyes scin-
tillate with an angry light.

"What is it you say, Fifiue? And
who gave you these?"

But the child only answered breath-
lessly and confusedly. The apples were
delicious, and Fifiue was happy, but
madam did not like strangers or
strangers' gifts. She sat anxiously at
the high window next day, looking
down for Fifiue as she came from
school.

The street was long and winding,
grimy and decaying; but people
swarmed in it as if life was not unde-
sirable. They thrived in the scents and
sounds and stifling air; they laughed,
they chatted, they congregated in the
tumble-down doorways; and looking
their poverty square in the face, shook
hands with it, as it were.

But the street had its pleasures, too,
once in awhile, and its pictures. As at
this instant, when madam, looking
down from the high window, saw a
wagon-load of apples come jolting
along, ruddy, shining, and mellow. A
boy in a brimless hat and a blue shirt
sat in the midst of the heap, and a tall,
sunburned young fellow, with trousers
tucked in his boots, walked alongside,
hand in hand with a child, who danced
about him, with her golden hair flying
and her pretty feet twinkling, as she
pointed up, to the far window where
madam sat.

In one sudden moment she saw the
little one caught up, deposited in a half-
basket, and both, lifted on the
young man's shoulder, disappeared in
the house.

Up stairs they came, tramping,
laughing, and Fifiue, eager, joyful, and
breathless, was deposited at the door.

"Oh, madam!" she cried, clapping

her hands, "see what we have brought
you. And here Monsieur Jack."
Outside, abashed, blushing, stood the
young man with the basket. Madam
appearing on the threshold put him to
utter confusion. She had the bearing
of a duchess.

"What will you?" queried she,
haughtily.

"Excuse me, madam," was the stam-
mering reply, as the speaker doffed his
great straw hat. "I mean—I did not
mean—that is, I promised the little one
a ride."

"And?" said madam sternly.

"And," said the youth, gathering up
courage, his honest, kindly eyes look-
ing straight into hers, "she needs a lit-
tle change; a ride would not harm her,
madam."

"It is a liberty unpardonable. In my
country it is not known that a vendor—
a street vendor—will intrude himself on
a lady's apartment. People know their
place, and—"

"I beg your pardon, madam. You
are right," interrupted the stranger, his
cheek flushing hotly. "But this is
America. "But this is America, not
Paris, Good-day."

He was gone. The place was blank
and desolate. The apples lay on the
table. The sunlight had faded from the
window. Fifiue set up a frightful cry
of disappointment. Ah! no ride, no
pleasure, no delights in prospect now.

She did not go dancing off to school
next day, singing as she went. She
came back with a headache, carrying it
gloomily up to the top floor and to the
waiting mother.

Two days, three, passed. Fifiue was
really ill. She chattered incessantly about
the ride and the beautiful country. She
cried to see Monsieur Jack, as she had
named her friend.

One day madam slipped down stairs
to buy some apples. It was the day for
Monsieur Jack's appearance. The young
man bowed when he caught sight of the
Princess from the top floor. Should he
carry the apples up stairs for her?

Little Fifiue, sitting flushed and fev-
erish among a heap of pillows, lit up
radiantly at sight of the sunburned face
of the great straw hat.

"Ah, madam," she cried, clapping
her hands, "now we shall go in the
country!"

But Fifiue was ill. Not for a day nor
a week, but for a long, weary month
the little creature pined and sickened
in the upper story of the tenement
house. And it fell out that nearly
every day the young man's step sounded
on the stair, and Monsieur Jack's face
became familiar to all the neighbors as
he made his way to the topmost floor.

He petted Fifiue, and chatted to her,
and charmed madam by stepping softly
in spite of his big boots. Fifiue watched
hungry for his coming, and then it
was, doubtless, that madam also found
herself listening for his footstep on the
stair.

One sunny afternoon she stood
smoothing her hair in front of the
cracked looking glass. The day was a
hopeful one. The day was clear, the
sun shone, Fifiue was better. Madam's
eyes brightened as she stood at the
glass. She adjusted her knot of ribbon,
she touched up the white ruffs about
her shapely throat. Without there was
a creaking of the rickety stair, the
eyes shone brighter in the dim little
mirror. Madam stopped in her toilet
suddenly, seeing their expectant glee.

"Can it be possible?" she said to her-
self. "Have I come to this—to sewing
in a garret, to starving, to begging,
almost, for Fifiue, and to looking for-
ward to the visit of a young man who
is an apple vendor? Is it that I must at
last belong to the *canaille*? Paul—
Professor Paul, was I ever worthy of
thee?"

But when she opened the door, and
Monsieur Jack stood modestly on the
threshold, madam's eyes did not lose
their sparkle. He brought a bunch of
pinks for Fifiue.

"Ah!" cried Fifiue, clapping her
hands, "they came from the country,
no, here, madam! When shall we go—
oh, when shall we go, madam?"

The mother looked at her tenderly,
pitifully. The child had grown so thin
with long illness.

"My little one," said she, "I wish
I was back with thee in my beautiful
Paris, where we should have music and
flowers and parks, and—"

"You can have them all here," in-
terrupted Monsieur Jack, quietly.

There were tears in Madam's eyes, but
she turned upon him hotly:

"What will you?" she said. "Shall
I take shame to myself that I am poor?
I was poor in Paris, but I named it not
so. In my own country I have pleasure,
gentle life. My Paris is very wise, very
quiet. He will not have touched him-
self with what is rude and rough. The
neighbors say he will never be rich. 'Il
n'a pas inventé la poudre,' they say and
laugh—'he was not the inventor of gun-
powder.' But we also laugh and are
happy. I have my pot of flowers; I
have my few days. It costs but a few
cents to be happy. Ah, why did we ever
come away, my petite, to be reminded
that we are beggars?"

Madam caught up her white handker-
chief and wiped her eyes. There
was an awkward pause. Monsieur Jack
played with Fifiue's long locks, looking
down silent and reproved.

Fifiue, not knowing what was the
matter, began to cry.

"Ah, yes," said madam, excitedly,
seeing the child's tears. "We can have
all things here, my Fifiue, yet thou
hast nothing. My Paris is very wise, very
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ever come away, my petite, to be remind-
ed that we are beggars?"

I must have her helped; and I am poor!
I am poor! I am poor!"

It seemed to be a relief to madam's
mind that this well-kept secret was out
at last.

"Madam," said the visitor, rising, "I
also am poor."

"Excuse me, I pray you," said
madam, her face paling suddenly; "I
have talked much—it is weak. I ask
your pardon."

"When shall we go—when shall we
go in the country?" asked Fifiue, see-
ing a pause.

"Thou canst not go alone, little one,"
said the mother, smiling, and rallying
her spirit.

"She need not go alone, madam,"
suggested Monsieur Jack, putting the
child on the head—"not if you will go
with her."

Ah! What can poor people do? Was
not madam the wife of a professor, and
worked, usually mess together—one of
their number being appointed caterer,
and receiving for that purpose a
certain amount monthly. The money
is devoted to the purchase of materials
for "stiches," together with black bread
and buckwheat—all eatables beyond
these three things being paid for out of
the member's own pocket. Caterers
have usually a keen eye for essences
that swell the substance of soup, and
mostly manage to add beet-root, cum-
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