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"THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE IS THE LEGITIMATE SOURCE, AND THE HAPPINESS OF THE PEOPLE THE TRUE END OF GOVERNMENT."

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"Poet's Corner."

The Phantom.

BY C. P. SHIRAS.

No foeman ever yet has passed
The Castle's frowning wall
But now, within, a childish fear
Hath come upon them all;
For every night a song is heard
Upon the sea below—
It seemeth not a human voice,
So pure and wild its flow.
And, every night, a phantom white,
Is seen upon the bay,
And ere the light, in seeming fright,
It swiftly glides away.

The Baron and the Baroness
Are sore oppressed with fear,
And sturdy men-at-arms turn pale,
And talk of danger near;
And, yet, the Baron's daughter fair,
Though youngest of them all,
Would seem, of all, the least to dread
That danger may befall;
While, every night, the phantom white,
Is seen upon the bay;
But ere the light, in seeming fright,
It swiftly glides away.

The night is dark, the storm is rude,
And fiercely roars the wind,
And yet within the castle-halls
A fiercer storm we find.
The Baron's only daughter fair
Hath fled her mother's side;
A poor, but bold and gallant knight,
Hath won her for his bride!
They see to night, the phantom white
A dancing o'er the bay,
But ere the light, in seeming fright,
It vanisheth away!

The knight hath borne his trembling bride,
Adown the rocky shore,
The shoutings of his merrymen
Have drowned the billows' roar;
The shallop spreads her snowy sail,
Her course again is free.
She'll hide no more along the shore,
Her home is o'er the sea!
And from to-night, no phantom white
Will dance upon the bay,
For ere the light, a rapid flight,
Hath borne her far away.

A Tale of Norway.

FEATS ON THE FIORD.

BY HARRIET MARTINEAU.

CHAPTER IX.

Hund's Report.

Hund performed his journey by night—a journey perfectly unlike any that was ever performed by night in England.—He did not for a moment think of going by the fiord, short and easy as it would have been in comparison with the land route. He would rather have mounted all the steeps and crossed the snows of Sulitelma itself, many times over, than have put himself in the way a second time of such a vision as he had seen. Laboriously and diligently, therefore, he overcame the difficulties of the path, crossing ravines, wading through swamps, scaling rocks, leaping across watercourses, and only now and then throwing himself down on some tempting slope of grass, to wipe his brows, and, where opportunity offered, to moisten his parched throat with the wild strawberries which were fast ripening in the sheltered nooks of the hills. It was now so near midsummer, and the nights were so fast melting into the days, that Hund could at the latest scarcely see a star, though there was not a fleece of cloud in the whole circle of the heavens. While yet the sun was on the fiord, and glittering on every farm house window that fronted the west, all around was as still as if the deepest darkness had settled down. The eagles were at rest on their rocky ledge, a thousand feet above the waters. The herons had left their stand on their several promontories of the fiord, and the flapping of their wings overhead was no more heard. The raven was gone home; the cattle were all far away on the mountain pasture; the goats were hidden in the woods which yielded the tender shoots on which they subsisted. The round eyes of a white owl stared out upon him here and there, from under the eaves of a farm-house; and these seemed to be the only eyes besides his own that were open.—Hund knew as he passed one dwelling after another—knew as well as if he had looked in at the windows—that the inhabitants were all asleep, even with the sunshine lying across their very faces.

Then up came the sun again, and the new thatch reeked in his beams, and the birds shook off sleep and plumed themselves, and the peak of Sulitema with the softest rose-color, and the silvery fish leaped out of the water, and the blossoms in the gardens opened, though it was only an hour after midnight. Every creature except man seemed eager to make the most of the short summer season—to waste none of its bright hours, which would be gone too soon;—every creature except man; but man must have rest, be the sun high or sunk beneath the horizon; so that Hund saw no face, and heard no human voice, before he found himself standing at the top of the steep rocky pathway which led down to Erlingsen's abode.

Hund might have known that he should find everything in a different state from that in which he had left the place; but yet he was rather surprised at the aspect of the farm. The stable-doors stood wide; and there was no trace of milk-pails. The hurdles of the fold were piled upon one another in a corner of the yard. It was plain that herd, flock, and dairy-women were gone to the mountain; and, though Hund dreaded meeting Erica, it struck upon his heart to think that she was not here. He felt now how much it was for her sake that he had come back.

He half resolved to go away again; but from the gallery of the house some snow-white sheets were hanging to dry; and this showed that some neat and busy female hands were still here. Next, his eye fell upon the boat which lay gently rocking with the receding tide in its tiny cove; and he resolved to lie down in it and rest, while considering what to do next. He went down, stepping gently over the pebbles of the beach, lest his tread should reach and waken any ear through the open windows, lay down at the bottom of the boat, and, as might have been expected, fell asleep as readily as an infant in a cradle.

Of course he was discovered; and, Oddo was the discoverer. Oddo was the first to come forth, to water the one horse that remained at the farm, and to give a shake to the two or three little cocks of hay which had been mown behind the house. His quick eye noted the deep marks of a man's feet in the sand and pebbles, below high water mark, proving that some one had been on the premises during the night. He followed these marks to the boat, where he was amazed to find the enemy (as he called Hund) fast asleep. Oddo was in a great hurry to tell his grandfather (Erlingsen being on the mountain;) but he thought it only proper caution to secure his prize from escaping in his absence.

He summoned his companion, the dog which had warned him of many dangers abroad, and helped him faithfully with his work at home; and nothing could be clearer to Skorro than that he was to crouch on the thwarts of the boat, with his nose close to Hund's face, and not to let Hund stir till Oddo came back. Then Oddo ran, and wakened his grandfather, who made all haste to rise and dress.—Erica now lived in Peder's house. She had taken her lover's place there, since his disappearance; as the old man must be taken care of, and the house kept; and her mistress thought the interest and occupation good for her. Hearing Oddo's story, she rushed out, and her voice was soon heard in passionate entreaty, above the bark of the dog, which was trying to prevent the prisoner from rising.

'Only tell me,' Erica was heard to say, 'only tell me where and how he died. I know he is dead—I knew he would die, from that terrible night when we were betrothed. Tell me who did it—for I am sure you know. Was it Nipen?—Yes, it was Nipen, whether it was done by wind or water, or human hands. But speak, and tell me where he is, and I will try—I will try never to speak to you again—never to—'

Hund looked miserable: he moved his lips, but no sound was heard mingling with Erica's rapid speech.

Madame Erlingsen, who, with Orga, had by this time reached the spot, laid her hand on Erica's arm, to beg for a moment's silence, made Oddo call his dog out of the boat, and then spoke, in a severe tone, to Hund.

'Why do you shake your head, Hund, and speak no word? Say what you know for the sake of those whom, we grievously suspect, you have deeply injured. Say what you know, Hund.'

'What I say is, that I do not know,' replied Hund, in a hoarse and agitated voice. 'I only know that we live in an enchanted place, here by this fiord, and that the spirits try to make us answer for their doings. The very first night after I went forth, this very boat was spirited away from me, so that I could not come home. Nipen had a spite against me there—to make you all suspect me. I declare to you that the boat was gone, in a twinkling, by magic, and I heard the cry of the spirit that took it.'

'What was the cry like?' asked Oddo, gravely.

'Where were you, that you were not spirited away with the boat?' asked his mistress.

'I was tumbled upon the shore, I don't know how,' declared Hund—'found myself sprawling upon a rock, while the creature's cries brought my heart into my mouth as I lay.'

'Alone? Were you alone?' asked his mistress.

'I had landed the pastor some hours before, madame; and I took nobody else with me, as Stiorna can tell; for she saw me go.'

'Stiorna is at the mountain,' observed madame, coolly.

'But, Hund,' said Oddo, 'how did Nipen take hold of you when it laid you sprawling on the rock? Neck or heels? Or did it bid you go and harken whether the pirates were coming, and whip away the boat before you came back? Are you quite sure that you sprawled on the rock at all before you ran away from the horrible cry you speak of? Our rocks are very slippery when Nipen is at one's heels.'

Hund stared at Oddo, and his voice was yet hoarser when he said that he had long thought that boy was a favorite with Nipen; and he was very sure of it now.

Erica had thrown herself down on the sand, hiding her face on her hands, on the edge of the boat, as if in despair of her misery being attended to—her questions answered. Old Peder stood beside her, stroking her hair tenderly; and he now spoke the things she could not.

'Attend to me, Hund,' said Peder, in the grave, quiet tone which every one regarded. 'Hear my words, and, for your own sake, answer them. We suspect you of being in communication with the pirates yonder; we suspect that you went to meet them when you refused to go hunting the bears. We know that you have long felt ill-will towards Rolf—envy of him—jealousy of him—and—'

Here Erica looked up, pale as ashes, and said, 'Do not question him further. There is no truth in his answers. He spoke falsehood even now.'

Peder saw how Hund shrunk under this, and thought the present the moment to get truth out of him, if he ever could speak it. He therefore went on to say:

'We suspect you of having done something to keep your rival out of the way, in order that you might obtain the house and station—and perhaps something else that you wish.'

'Have you killed him?' asked Erica, abruptly, looking full in his face.

'No,' returned Hund, firmly. From his manner everybody believed this much.

'Do you know that anybody else has killed him?'

'No.'

'Do you know whether he is dead or alive?'

To this Hund could, in the confusion of his ideas about Rolf's fate and condition, fairly say 'No;' as also to the question, 'Do you know where he is?'

Then they all cried out: 'Tell us what you do know about him.'

'Ay, there you come,' said Hund, resuming some courage, and putting on the appearance of more than he had. 'You load me with false accusations, and when you find yourselves all in the wrong, you alter your tone, and put yourselves under obligation to me for what I will tell. I will treat you better than you treat me, and I will tell you plainly why. I repent of my feelings towards my fellow-servant, now that evil has befallen him——'

'What? O what?' cried Erica.

'He was seen fishing on the fiord, in that poor little worn-out skiff. I myself saw him. And when I looked next for the skiff, it was gone—it had disappeared.'

'And where were you?'

'Never mind where I was. I was not with him, but about my own business.—And I tell you, I no more laid my finger on him or his skiff than any of you.'

'Where was it?'

'Close by Vogel-islet.'

Erica started, and in one moment's flush of hope, told that Rolf had said he should be safe at any time near Vogel islet. Hund caught at her words so eagerly as to make a favorable impression on all, who saw, what was indeed the truth, that he would have been glad to know that Rolf was alive. Their manner so changed towards Hund, that if Stiorna had been there, she would have triumphed. But the more they considered the case, the more improbable it seemed that Rolf should have escaped drowning.

'Mother, what do you think?' whispered the gentle Orga.

'I think, my dear, that we shall never forgive ourselves for letting Rolf go out in that old skiff.'

'Then you think—you feel quite sure, mother, that Nipen had nothing to do with it.'

'I feel confident, my dear, that there is no such being as Nipen.'

'Even after all that has happened?—after this, following upon Oddo's prank that night?'

'Even so, Orga. We suffer from our own carelessness and folly, my love; and it makes us neither wiser nor better to charge the consequences upon evil spirits—to charge our good God with permitting revengeful beings to torment us, instead of learning from his chastisements to sin in the same way no more.'

"But, mother, if you are right, how very far wrong all these others are!"

'It is but little, my child, that the wisest of us know; but there is a whole eternity before us, every one, to grow wise in. Some,' and she looked towards Oddo, 'may outgrow their mistakes here; and others,' looking at old Peder, 'are travelling fast towards a place where everybody is wiser than years or education can make us here. Your father and I do wish, for Frolich and you, that you should rest your reverence, your hopes and fears, on none but the good God. Do we not know that not even a sparrow falleth to the ground without his will?'

'Poor Erica would be less miserable if she could think so,' sighed Orga. 'She will die soon, if she goes on to suffer as she does. I wish the good bishop would come; for I do not think M. Kollsen gives her any comfort. Look now! what can she have to say to Hund?'

What she had to say to Hund was,

'I believe some of the things you have told. I believe that you did not lay hands on Rolf.'

'Bless you! Bless you for that!' interrupted Hund, almost forgetting how far he really was guilty in the satisfaction of hearing these words from the lips that spoke them.

'Tell me, then,' proceeded Erica, 'how you believe he really perished.—Do you fully believe he perished?'

'I believe,' whispered Hund, 'that the strong hand pulled him down——down to the bottom.'

'I knew it,' said Erica, turning away.

'Erica, one word,' exclaimed Hund, 'I must stay here—I am very miserable, and I must stay here, and work and work, till I get some comfort. But you must tell me how you think of me—you must say that you do not hate me.'

'I do hate you,' said Erica with disgust, as her suspicions of his wanting to fill Rolf's place were renewed, 'I mistrust you, Hund, more deeply than I can tell.

'Will no penitence change your feelings, Erica? I tell you I am as miserable as you.'

'That is false, like everything else that you say,' cried Erica. 'I wish you would go—go and seek Rolf under the waters—'

Hund shuddered at the thought, as it recalled what he had seen and heard at the islet. Erica saw this, and sternly repeated,

'Go and bring back Rolf from the deeps; and then I will cease to hate you. Ah! I see the despair in your face. Such despair never came from any woman's words where there was not a bad conscience to back them.'

Hund felt that this was true, and made no reply.

As Erica slowly returned into Peder's house, Oddo ran past and was there before her. He closed the door when she had entered, put his hand within hers, and said,

'Did Rolf really tell you that he should be safe anywhere near Vogel Islet.'

'Yes,' sighed Erica—'safe from the pirates. That was his answer when I begged him not to go so far down the fiord; but Rolf always had an answer when one asked him not to go into danger.—You see how it ended,—and he never would believe in *that* danger.'

'I shall never be happy again, if this is Nipen's doing,' said Oddo. 'But, Erica, you went one trip with me, and I know you are brave. Will you go another? Will you go to the islet, and see what Rolf could have meant about being safe there?'

Erica brightened for a moment; and perhaps would have agreed to go; but Peder came in; and Peder said he knew the islet well, and that it was universally considered that it was now inaccessible to human foot, and that that was the reason why the fowl flourished there as they did in no other place. Erica must not be permitted to go so far down among the haunts of the pirates. Instead of this, her mistress had just decided that, as there was no means of getting rid of Hund—as indeed his depressed state of spirits seemed to give him some title to be received again—and as Erica could not be expected to remain just now in his presence, she should set off immediately for the mountain, and request Erlingsen to come home. This was only hastening her departure by two or three days. At the seater she would find less to try her spirits than here; and when Erlingsen came, he would if he thought proper, have Hund carried before a magistrate; and would, at least, set such inquiries afloat through the whole region as would bring to light anything that might chance to be known of Rolf's fate.

Erica could not deny that this was the best plan that could be pursued, though she had no heart for going to the seater, any more than for doing anything else.—Under Peder's urgency, however, she made up her bundle of clothes, took in her hand her lure, [wooden trumpet,] with which to call home the cattle in the evenings, bade her mistress farewell privately, and stole away without Hund's knowledge, while Oddo was giving him meat and drink within the house. Old Peder listened to her parting footsteps; and her mistress watched her up the first hill, thinking to herself how unlike this was the usual cheerful departure to the mountain dairies. Never, indeed, had a heavier heart burdened the footsteps of the wayfarer about to climb the slopes of Sulitelma.

CHAPTER X.

Seeking the Uplands.

Now that the great occasion had come—that brightest day of the year—the day of going to the seater, how unlike was it to all that the lovers had imagined and planned! How unlike was the situation of the two! There was Rolf cooped up in a dim cave, his heart growing heavy as his ear grew weary of the incessant dash and echo of the waters! And here was Erica on the free mountain side, where all was silent except the occasional rattle of a brook over the stones, and the hum of a cloud of summer flies. The lovers were alike in their unhappiness only; and hardly in this, so much the most wretched of the two was Erica.

The sun was hot; and her path occasionally lay under rocks which reflected the heat upon the passenger. She did not heed this, for the aching of her heart. Then she had to pass through a swamp, whence issued a host of mosquitoes, to annoy any who intruded upon their domain. It just occurred to Erica that Rolf made her pass this place on horseback last year, well veiled, and completely defended from these stinging tormentors; but she did not heed them now. When, somewhat higher up, she saw in the lofty distance a sunny slope of long grass undulating in the wind, like the surface of a lake, tears sprang into her eyes; for Rolf had said that when they came in sight of the waving pasture, she would alight and walk the rest of the way with him. Instead of this, and instead of the gay procession from the farm, musical with the singing of boys and girls, the lowing of the cows and the bleating of the kids, all rejoicing together at going to the mountains, here she was alone, carrying a widowed heart, and wandering with unwilling steps further and further from the spot where she had seen Rolf.

She dashed the tears from her eyes, and looked behind her, at the entrance of a ravine which would hide from her the fiord and the dwelling she had left. Thor islet lay like the fragment of a leafy forest cast into the blue waters; but Vogel islet could not be seen. It was not too far down to be seen from a height like this; but it was hidden behind the promontories by which the fiord was contracted.—Erica could see what she next looked for, knowing, as she did, precisely where to look. She could see the two graves belonging to the household—the two hillocks which were railed in behind the house; but she turned away sickening at the thought that Rolf could not even have a grave; that that poor consolation was denied her. She looked behind her no more, but made her way through the ravine; the more rapidly because she had seen a man ascending by the same path at no great distance, and she had little inclination to be joined by a party of Laplanders, seeking a fresh pasture for their reindeer; still less by any neighbor from the fiord, who might think that civility required that he should escort her to the seater. This wayfarer was walking at a pace so much faster than hers, that he would soon pass; and she would hide among the rocks beside the tarn [lake] at the head of the ravine till he had gone by.

It was refreshing to come out of the hot steep ravine upon the grass at the upper end of it. Such grass! A line of pathway was trodden in it straight upwards, by those who had before accumled the mountain; but Erica left this path, and turned to the right, to seek the tarn which lay hidden among the rocks. The herbage was knee deep, and gay with flowers—with wild geranium, pansies, and especially with the yellow blossoms which give its peculiar hue and flavor to the Gammel cheese, and to the butter made in the mountain dairies of Norway.—Through this rich pasture Erica waded till she reached the tarn which fed the stream which gambolled down the ravine. The death-cold unfathomed waters lay calm and still under the shelter of the rocks which nearly surrounded them.—Even where crags did not rise abruptly from the water, huge blocks were scattered; masses which seemed to have lain so long as to have seen the springing herbage of a thousand summers.

In the shadow of one of these blocks, Erica sank down into the grass. There she, and her bundle, and her long lure were half buried; and this, at last, felt something like rest. Here she would remain long enough to let the wayfarer have a start up the mountain; and by that time she would be cool and tranquilized—yes, tranquilized; for here she could seek that peace which never failed when she sought it as christians may. She hid her face in the fragrant grass, and did not look up again till the grief of her soul was stilled. Then her eye and her heart were open to the beauty of the place she had made her temple of worship; and she gazed around till she saw something that surprised her. A reindeer stood on the ridge, his whole form, from his branching head to his slender legs, being clearly marked against the bright sky. He was not alone. He was the sentinel, set to watch on behalf of several companions—two or three being perched on ledges of the rock, browsing; one standing half buried in the herbage of the pasture, and one on the margin of the water, drinking as it would not have dreamed of doing if the wind had not been in the wrong quarter for letting him know how near the hidden Erica was.

This pretty sight was soon over. In a few moments, the whole company appeared to take flight all at once, without her having stirred a muscle. Away they went, with such speed and noiselessness that they appeared not to touch the ground. From point to point of the rock they sprang, and the last branchy head disappeared over the ridge, almost before Erica could stand upright, to see all she could of them.

She then discerned the cause of their alarm. She thought it could not have been herself; and it was not. The traveller who, she had hoped, was now some way up the mountain, was standing on the margin of the tarn, immediately opposite to her, so that the wind had carried the scent to the herd. The traveller saw her at the same moment that she perceived him; but Erica did not discover this, and sank down again into the grass, hoping so to remain undisturbed. She could not thus observe what his proceedings were; but her ear soon informed her that he was close by. His feet were rustling in the grass.

She sat up, and took her bundle and her lure, believing now that she must accept the unwelcome civility of an escort for the whole of the rest of the way, and thinking she might as well make haste, and get it over. The man, however, seemed in no hurry. Before she could rise, he took his seat on the huge stone beside her, crossed his arms, made no greeting, but looked her full in the face.

She did not know the face; nor was it like any she had ever seen. There was such long hair, and so much beard, that the eyes seemed the only feature which made any distinct impression. Erica's heart now began to beat violently.—Though wishing to be alone, she had not dreamed of being afraid till now; but it now occurred to her that she was seeing the rarest of sights—one not seen twice in a century; no other than the mountain-demon. Sulitelma, as the highest mountain in Norway, was thought to be his favorite haunt; and considering his strange appearance, and his silence, it could hardly be other than himself.

The test would be whether he would speak first; a test which she resolved to try, though it was rather difficult to meet and return the stare of such a neighbor without speaking. She could not keep this up for more than a minute; so she sprang to her feet, rested her lure upon her shoulder, took her bundle in her hand, and began to wade back through the high grass to the pathway, almost expecting, when she thought of her mother's fate, to be seized by a strong hand, and be cast into the unfathomable tarn, whose waters were said to well up from the centre of the earth. Her companion, however, merely walked by her side. As he did not offer to carry her bundle, he could be no countryman of hers; There was not a peasant in Nordland who would not have had more courtesy.

They walked quietly on till the tarn was left some way behind. Erica found she was not to die that way. Presently after she came in sight of a settlement of Lapps—a cluster of low and dirty tents, round which some tame reindeer were feeding. Erica was not sorry to see these; though no one knew better than she the helpless cowardice of these people; and it was not easy to say what assistance they could afford against the mountain-demon. Yet they were human beings, and would appear in answer to a cry.—She involuntarily shifted her lure, to be ready to utter a call. The stranger stopped to look at the distant tents, and Erica went on at the same pace. He presently overtook her, and pointed towards the Lapps with an inquiring look. Erica only nodded.

'Why you no speak?' growled the stranger, in broken language.

'Because I have nothing to say,' declared Erica, in the sudden vivacity inspired by the discovery that this was probably no demon. Her doubts were renewed, however, by the next question.

'Is the bishop coming?'

Now, none were supposed to have a deeper interest in the holy bishop's travels than the evil spirits of any region thro' which he was to pass.

'Yes, he is coming,' replied Erica.—'Are you afraid of him?'

The stranger burst into a loud laugh at her question; and very like a mocking fiend he looked, as his thick beard parted to show his wide mouth, with its two ranges of teeth. When he finished laughing, he said, 'No, no—we no fear bishop.'

'We!' repeated Erica, to herself.—'He speaks for his tribe as well as himself.'

'We no fear bishop,' said the stranger still laughing. 'You no fear——?' and he pointed to the long stretch of path—the prodigious ascent before them.

Erica said there was nothing to fear on the mountain for those who did their duty to the powers, as it was her intention to do. Her first Gammel cheese was to be for him whose due it was; and it should be the best she could make.

This speech she thought would suit; whatever might be the nature of her companion. If it was the demon, she could do no more to please him than promise him his cheese.

Her companion seemed not to understand or attend to what she said. He again asked if she was not afraid to travel alone in so dreary a place, adding that if his countrywomen were to be overtaken by a stranger like him, on the wilds of a mountain, they would scream and fly;—all which he acted very vividly, by way of making out his imperfect speech, and trying her courage at the same time.

When Erica saw that she had no demon for a companion, but only a foreigner, she was so much relieved as not to be afraid at all. She said that nobody tho't of being frightened in summer time in her country. Winter was the time for that. When the days were long, so that travellers knew their way, and when everybody was abroad, so that you could not go far without meeting a friend, there was nothing to fear.

'You go abroad to meet friends, and leave your enemies behind.'

At the moment, he turned to look back. Erica could not now help watching him, and she cast a glance homewards too.—They were so high up the mountain that the fiord and its shores were in full view; and more;—for the river was seen in its windings from the very skirts of the mountain to the fiord, and the town of Saltdalen standing on its banks. In short the whole landscape to the west lay before them, from Sulitelma to the point of the horizon where the islands and rocks melted into the sea.

The stranger had picked up an eagle's feather in his walk; and he now pointed with it to the tiny cove in which Erlingsen's farm might be seen, looking no bigger than an infant's toy, and said,

'Do you leave an enemy there, or is Hund now your friend?'

'Hund is nobody's friend, unless he happens to be yours,' Erica replied, perceiving at once that her companion belonged to the pirates. 'Hund is everybody's enemy; and, above all, he is an enemy to himself. He is a wretched man.'

'The bishop will cure that,' said the stranger. 'He is coward enough to call in the bishop to cure all. When comes the bishop?'

'Next week.'

'What day, and what hour?'

Erica did not choose to gratify so close a curiosity as this. She did not reply; and while silent, was not sorry to hear the distant sound of cattle-bells;—and Erlingsen's cattle-bells, too. The stranger did not seem to notice the sound, even though quickening his pace, to suit Erica's who pressed on faster when she believed protection was at hand. And yet the next thing the stranger said brought her to a full stop. He said he thought a part of Hund's business with the bishop would be to get him to disenchant the fiord, so that boats might not be spirited away almost before men's eyes; and that a rower and his skiff might not sink like lead one day, and the man may be heard the second day, and seen the third, so that there was no satisfactory knowledge as to whether he was really dead. Erica stopped, and her eager looks made the inquiry which her lips could not speak. Her eagerness put her companion on his gaurd, and he would explain no further than by saying that the fiord was certainly enchanted, and that strange tales were circulating all round its shores—very striking to a stranger—a stranger had nothing more to do with the wonders of a country than to listen to them. He wanted to turn the conversation back to Hund. Having found out that he was at Erlingsen's, he next tried to discover what he had said and done since his arrival. Erica told the little there was to tell—that he seemed full of sorrow and remorse. She told this in hope of a further explanation about drowned men being seen alive; but the stranger stopped when the bells were heard again, and a woman's voice singing nearer still. He complimented Erica on her courage, and turned to go back the way he came.

'Stay,' said Erica. 'Do come to the dairy, now you are so near.'

The man walked away rapidly.

'My Master is here close at hand—he will be glad to see a stranger,' she said, following him, with the feeling that her only chance of hearing something of Rolf was departing. The stranger did not turn but only walked on faster, and with longer strides, down the slope.

The only thing now to be done was to run forward and send a messenger after him. Erica forgot heat, weariness, and the safety of her property, and ran on towards the singing voice. In five minutes she found the singer. Frolich, lying along the ground and picking cloud-berries, with which she was filling her basket for supper.

'Where is Erlingsen?—quick—quick!' cried Erica.

'My father? You may just see him with your good eyes—up there.'

And Frolich pointed to a patch of verdure on a slope high up on the mountain, where the geezer might just discern that there were shay-cocks standing, and two or three moving figures beside them.

'Stiorna is there to-day, besides Jan. They hope to finish this evening,' said Frolich; 'and so here I am, all alone, and I am glad you have come, to help me to have a good supper ready for them. Their hunger will beat all my berry-gathering.'

'You are alone?' said Erica, discovering that it was well that the pirate had turned back when he did. 'You alone, and gathering berries, instead of having an eye on the cattle! Who has an eye on the cattle?'

'Why, no one,' answered Frolich.—'Come now, do not tease me with bidding me remember the bishop of Tronyem's cattle. The underground people have something to do elsewhere to-day; they give no heed to us.'

'We must give heed to them, however, said Erica. 'Show me where the cattle are, and I will collect them, and have an eye on them till supper is ready.'

'You shall do no such thing Erica.—You shall lie down here and pick berries with me, and tell me the news. That will rest you and me at the same time; for I am as tired of being alone, as you can be of climbing the mountain. But why are your hands empty? Who is to lend you clothes? And what will the cows say to your leaving your lure behind, when you know they like it so much better than Stiorna's?'

Erica explained that her bundle and lure were lying on the grass, a little way below; and Frolich sprang to her feet, saying that she would fetch them presently. Erica stopped her, and told her she must not go; nobody should go but herself. She could not answer to Erlingsen for letting one of his children follow the steps of a pirate, who might return at any moment.

Frolich had no longer any wish to go. She started off towards the sleeping-shed, and never stopped till she had entered it, and driven a provision-chest against the door, leaving Erica far behind.

Erica, indeed, was in no hurry to follow. She returned for her bundle and lure; and then, uneasy about the cattle being left without an eye upon them, and thus confided to the negligence of the underground people, she proceeded to an eminence where two or three of her cows were grazing, there sounded her lure.—She put her whole srength to it, in hope that others, besides the cattle, might appear in answer; for she was really anxious to see her master.

The peculiar and far from musical sounds did spread wide, over the pastures and up the slopes, and through the distant woods, so that the cattle of another seater stood to listen, and her own cows began to move—leaving the sweetest tufts of grass, and rising up from their couches in the richest herbage, to converge towards the point whence she called. The far off herdsman observed to his fellow that there was a new call among the pastures; and Erlingsen, on the upland, desired Jan and Stiorna to finish cocking the hay, and began his descent to the seater, to learn whether Erica had brought any news from home.

Long before he could appear, Frolich stole out trembling, and looking round her at every step. When she saw Erica she flew over the grass, and threw herself down in it at Erica's feet.

'Where is he?' she whispered. 'Has he come back?'

'I have not seen him. I dare say he is far off by this time at the Black Tarn, where I met him.'

'The Black Tarn! And do you mean that—no, you cannot mean that you came all the way together from the Black Tarn hither? Did you run? Did you shriek? O, what did you do?—with a pirate at your heels!'

'By my side, said Erica. 'We walked and talked.'

'With a pirate! But how did you know it was a pirate? Did he tell you so?'

'No; and at first I thought, and she sank her voice into a reverential whisper——I thought for some time it was the demon of this place. When I found it was only a pirate, I did not mind.'

'Only a pirate! Did not mind!' exclaimed Frolich. 'You are the strangest girl!—You are the most preverse creature! You think nothing of a pirate walking at your elbow for miles, and you would make a slave of yourself and me about these underground people, that my father laughs at, and that nobody ever saw. Ah! you say nothing aloud; but I know you are saying in your mind, 'Remember the Bishop of Tronyem's cattle.''

'You want news,' said Erica, avoiding, as usual, all conversation about her superstitions. 'How will it please you that the bishop is coming?'

'Very much, if we had any chance of seeing him. Very much, whether we see him or not, if he can give any help—any advice. * * * My poor Erica, I do not like to ask but you have had no good news, I fear.'

Erica shook her head.

'I saw that in your face in a moment.—Do not speak about it till you tell my father. He may help you—I cannot; so do not tell me anything.'

Erica was glad to take her at her word.—She kissed Frolich's hand, which lay on her knee, in token of thanks, and then inquired whether any gammel cheese was made yet.

'No,' said Frolich, inwardly sighing for news. 'We have the whey; but not sweet cream enough till after this evening's milking. So you are just in time.'

Erica was glad, as she could not otherwise have been sure of the demon having his due.

'There is your father,' said Erica. 'Now do go and gather more berries, Frolich.—There are not half enough; and you cannot be afraid of the pirate with your father within call. Now do go.'

'What is Erlingsen?—quick—quick!' cried Erica.

'My father? You may just see him with your good eyes—up there.'

And Frolich pointed to a patch of verdure on a slope high up on the mountain, where the geezer might just discern that there were shay-cocks standing, and two or three moving figures beside them.

'Stiorna is there to-day, besides Jan.

'So he will,' and I will hie me to myself,' observed Frolich. 'He says the cow-