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Select Poetry.

THE FLOWERY GRAVE.

BY G. W. WELLSHERR.

About the green and lonely tomb
 The roses and the lilies bloom
 That sweetly scent the summer air,
 Although they seem devoid of care;
 But she who lies beneath the sod
 Is now immortal with her God.

When winter to the hills had flown,
 And lovely spring delightsome shone,
 It was a lovely sister fair
 Whose fingers did arrange them there,
 With bending form and weeping eyes,
 "That they may tell where sister lies."

At early dawn and twilight gray
 'Twas her accustomed place to stray,
 And watch beside her sister's tomb,
 To see the rose and lily bloom;
 To dream of past and present bliss
 In worlds beyond, no more in this.

Upon the grave, in summer hours,
 She laid her head among the flowers,
 And watched them bloom, and saw them fade;
 And then a fairy garland made
 Across her brow and flowing hair,
 She wore it a memento there.

At each returning spring the tomb
 Is decked in all its former bloom;
 But she no more, at eve or dawn,
 Is seen returning o'er the lawn,
 To bathe with tears the withering hues,
 Nor heard to bid them sad adieus.

And yet, about the lonely tomb,
 The roses and the lilies bloom,
 But she whose care arranged them there,
 With all a sister's love and care,
 Has realized her hope—to see
 Her sister in Eternity.

A Good Story.

EFFIE.

BY AGNES HERBERT.

Effie stood watching the clouds from the little garret window up over the wood-shed.—She stood idly and dreamily, with her eyes crossed upon the sill, and her eyes fixed upon the gloomy blackness which was rapidly sweeping up over the blue sky, when a door below opened and a sharp yet not unpleasant voice, called, "Effie!"

Effie gave one more glance at the dark storm-clouds, and then turned and ran quickly down the old ricketty, creaking stairs. At their foot stood her aunt, a tall, thin woman of about forty-five, with a peculiar Martha-like look of care impressed upon her features.

Martha Myers was the eldest and only remaining maiden sister of a large family, or rather what had once been such. Long years before our story opens the father and mother had passed over the dark river. Then came successive changes, as one by one the children grew up and went forth into the world, or sought the shadow of another home. At length there remained only Sarah, the eldest of the family; James, who was some two years her junior; and Mary, the youngest, a lovely girl of seventeen.

Mary had been the pet and idol of the family. There never were such laughing blue eyes, such beautiful brown curls, or such rosy cheeks as little sister Mary's. And, then, who had so sweet a laugh, such winning ways, or so affectionate a disposition as Mary? From her cradle she ever reigned the household queen.

James and Martha Myers were much alike—both eminently practical, both grave, orderly and methodical. Upon their shoulders had fallen the weight of duty and responsibility as the guardians and chief supporters of an orphan family; and while the duties had been well performed, and the responsibility accepted with unshrinking trust, it had had the effect of moulding their natures into a different cast from those of the younger and care-free members of the family. But as the river flows unseen, underneath its icy covering, so there were warm, honest hearts lying beneath the practical every-dayish surface appearance of James and Martha.

Mary was now their only charge, and occupied the highest place in their hearts. But it was not until she had reached her eighteenth year, and was about to leave them for another, that they knew how well they loved her.

A young artist, visiting in their neighborhood, saw Mary, was struck with her beauty, and after worshipping at a distance for some time, sought her acquaintance and succeeded in winning her heart. He was worthy; and, although poor, was talented, and bid fair to attain success in his profession.

The young people removed to a western city, and for a time fortune smiled upon them.

There came long letters from Mary, and full of bright hopes and overflowing with happiness as she herself had ever been.

Two years elapsed, and the letters grew less buoyant and hopeful. Then there was a long silence; and when, after weeks of anxiety, James was about starting for the west, there came a letter with a black seal. It was from Mary—a few lines written in a weak, trembling hand, told of her husband's death, of the previous loss of their little all, through the failure of one they had trusted, and of her own severe illness and partial recovery.

The next morning James and Martha started for the west. In a few weeks they returned, bringing with them a little girl some two years old—Mary's child. They had reached the bedside of their sister only in time to listen to a few last loving words, and to receive from her the charge of her orphan child. Oh! the dreary bitter weight of sorrow which they brought back to their lovely home.

It is now four years since Effie came to the little old red house—the old home of her mother. She had proved a blessing and a consolation to James and Martha, for she had been to them the grand necessity of the human heart—something to love. It was perhaps more for her mother's sake than her own that it was so. With the child, individually and alone, they had little sympathy—they could not understand her, but she was Mary's child, and for this they loved her.

She was very unlike, both personally and mentally, what her mother had been. Her hair hung in jetty half waving, half curling tresses around a strangely characteristic and beautiful face. A broad high forehead, delicately pencilled and arched brows, large black eyes, shaded by long lashes, clear, yet dark complexion, with a faint rose tinge upon the rounded cheek, and a sweet childish mouth with dimples and cherry lips—the only feature which seemed child-like.

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And now to go back to the commencement of my story. Aunt Martha took the child by the hand and led her out of the woodshed, and into the house, before she said, "What on earth have you been doing of there all alone, Effie?"

The child looked up, shyly into her aunt's face as if to see whether an answer was required, and then said—
 "Only thinking."
 "Thinking! what were you thinking about?"
 "The clouds, and the winds, and—oh! I can't tell it," said the child, in a distressed voice, as the difference between her dreary, poetic reveries and the plain matter-of-fact reply which her aunt stood waiting to hear, jarred upon her sensitive nerves.

"Well, Effie, take your patchwork now and finish that block you commenced this morning."
 With a weary little sigh the child obeyed; but, ere she had taken many stitches, the storm, whose mutterings had grown louder and nearer, was at hand. The wind, which had been waiving plaintively around the house, now increased to a hoarse rushing gale, and the creaking gate was slammed to with a force that seemed sufficient to break it off the hinges. The peals of thunder, which had seemed like the booming of distant cannon, now came quick and sharp, as if a million pieces of artillery were being discharged over the roof of the old building. The flashes of lightning which momentarily lit up the gathering gloom seemed to pass in broad sheets through the room where Effie and her aunt were seated.

"Dear me!" said the latter, "where can James stay so? He'll be caught in the shower. I'm afraid."

Effie put down her work and went to the door just as her uncle stepped into the porch. A few large drops had fallen upon the planks which led to the well, and were spattered in the dry dust of the path.

"Just in time," said Uncle James. "I will be here in a moment; listen."

There was a roaring, rushing sound as of mighty waters in the distance. The next instant a flash of lightning, accompanied almost instantaneously by a heavy clap of thunder, was followed by a deluge of rain. It came down in torrents, mingled with incessant peals of thunder and blinding flashes of lightning.

Aunt Martha had lain by her work; not that she was affected by the sublimity of the storm, but because it had grown too dark to see well. Uncle James had seated himself in an old arm chair, and Effie stood quietly by his side.

"Are you afraid, Effie?" asked Uncle James, as he saw that her face was pale, and her eyes were looking with a strange light out upon the storm.

She shook her head slightly, but did not turn or withdraw her gaze for several moments. Then, with a sudden start, she sprang from his side and darted out of the door, out into the wild storm.

James and Martha could hardly believe their senses, and each turned to the other, as if seeking confirmation of what they half doubted. Uncle James caught up his hat and rushed to the door, pausing a moment involuntarily upon the porch as sheets of falling rain came down before her, while Aunt Martha exclaimed—
 "Mercy on me! Is the child mad?"

In a few moments James entered, bearing Effie in his arms. Her eyes were closed, and the dark hair was streaming over a face as pale as marble, while her dripping garments clung closely to her little form.

"She has fainted, I guess," said James, as he gave her into his sister's arms and threw off his wet coat.

"Bring me the camphor-bottle—quick!" exclaimed Martha. And pouring some out into her hand she dashed it into the child's face and commenced energetically chaffing brow, cheeks and hands. Soon a slight shudder ran over the little frame, and a feeble moan issued from the parting lips.

"She'll come to in a minute now. Build a good hot fire, James; we must get her warm as quick as possible."

James bestirred himself to gather dry wood and kindlings, while Martha commenced taking off Effie's dripping clothes. By the time a brisk fire was burning in the stove Martha had robed the child in her night-gown; and now, wrapping her up in some warm blankets, she placed her in the old roomy rocking-chair—in which pillows had been arranged so as to form a comfortable couch—and drew it up by the side of the stove.

"She is asleep," said Martha, as James bent over the child, and then laid his hand gently upon her pale brow. "She opened her eyes once while I was undressing her, but seemed to fall asleep in a moment. You see she breathes singularly."

"Well, Martha, what do you suppose possessed her to run out in that way?" inquired James.

"I can't imagine," replied his sister. "Effie is the strangest child I ever saw. I almost think, sometimes, she must be crazy; but where was she? where did you find her?"

"Leaning against the well-curb, with her head thrown back, and the rain dashing right into her face. It was enough to take her breath away—but I don't think she was quite gone when I reached her."

"Dear me! well, if she isn't sick after this. I'm sure I shall be thankful," said Martha.

Meanwhile the storm had abated, though the rain was falling; and Martha resumed her sewing, while James took from a drawer in the old-fashioned bureau a small leather covered account book and commenced an investigation of its contents. About an hour passed—the silence broken only as James or Martha arose to look at the sleeping child. Then, folding her work and placing it carefully in the work-basket with Effie's poor little unfinished patchwork, Martha commenced preparations for tea. There is a real pleasure in watching the movements of a skillful housekeeper. No hurry, no mis-moves, no confusion, but the object to be accomplished is performed with such a smooth, steady uniformity of purpose and movement, that a careless observer would scarcely notice its celerity. Martha Myers was a perfect specimen of a model housekeeper.

Soon, very soon, the little table stood spread with a tempting repast, arranged upon the snowy cloth with mathematical precision. The butter plate occupied the exact centre, and the dried beef, the honey, the cheese, the baked apples, the sponge cake and the cookies were placed in as regular order around it as though the whole was meant to represent the solar system—the little pat of golden butter being

the sun. One empty corner remained for the biscuit, which were not yet quite done.

"Shall you wake her?" said James, looking at Effie, as he saw that tea was most ready.

"No, she had better sleep as long as she wants to; I can get her some supper when she wakes up," replied Martha, as she filled the tea-pot.

At this moment the child opened her eyes. She looked puzzled for a moment, as she surveyed herself and her surroundings; and then seeming to remember and comprehend, a flush rose to her brow, and she suddenly dropped her eyes as they encountered Uncle James' curious and searching glance.

"How do you feel, Effie?" inquired Martha, pausing by the child's side with the pan of biscuit in one hand, and throwing back the outer covering with the other.

"My head aches a little," replied Effie, without raising her eyes.

"Well, sit up here to the table, and drink some tea and eat something, and I guess it will feel better," and Martha suited the action to the word by drawing the chair up to the table. "Come, Effie," she urged, as she observed that the child did not taste of the biscuit and honey she had placed before her, and was only playing with her tea-spoon: "do try and eat a little."

"I don't want anything, Aunt Martha; I'm not hungry; and leaning back in her chair, Effie closed her eyes languidly.

Martha's face wore an expression of anxiety, which was deepened when, after tea, she came out of the little room where she had been to put Effie to bed.

"I am really afraid, James, Effie is going to be sick; she has considerable fever now, and she looks strangely."

"Have you said anything to her yet about her running out in the storm?"

"I thought we had better not speak about it until she had recovered from the effect of it; but—she added, dropping her voice to a whisper—she has told me the reason of it herself."

James looked surprised at his sister's manner, but awaited impatiently for her to proceed, for she had stopped and seemed much moved.

"I had put her snugly in bed," Martha continued, and just coming out, when she said, "stop a minute, Aunt Martha," and when I went back to her she took hold of my hand and held it as tight as though she was afraid I would get away from her, while she said—I want to tell you why I ran out in the rain, so that you and Uncle James won't think me such a naughty girl. You know Uncle James read in the Bible this morning about the flood, and how the windows of Heaven were opened. And when the rain came down so this afternoon I was thinking about that, and wondering if they wasn't open then; when, Aunt Martha, said she, 'I heard my name called—and I knew it was my mother. It sounded just as I've heard it when I've dreamed about her; and I knew that the windows of Heaven were open, and I couldn't help running out in the rain to look up. You know I wanted to see my mother so much—but I couldn't see her, Aunt Martha; the rain blinded me, and I could only see the light, and I felt so bad—and I don't remember anything more until I woke up in the rocking-chair."

Martha's voice had trembled with emotion while repeating the child's story, and now she burst into tears. James arose and walked to the door, where he remained some time. At length, turning round, he said in a husky voice—
 "Did she say anything more?"

"No, she let go my hand and shut her eyes without another word," and Martha wiped away her tears with her apron and commenced clearing the table.

At nine o'clock that evening Effie had grown worse; her cheeks were flushed with fever, and she moaned painfully in her sleep. Martha had soaked her feet, and made various kinds of herb tea, but her skill in medicine extended no farther, and now, as she stood watching the child, she turned to James, saying—
 "I can do no more, and she is growing worse. You must go for the doctor."

Without a word James put on his overcoat, took down the lantern and went out to the barn, whence, in a few minutes, he drove off at a rapid rate. An hour had perhaps elapsed ere he returned with the physician. Doctor Brown was a pleasant, kindly looking man, and, with a cheerful smile, which gave encouragement to James and Martha, he approached the couch of the little sufferer. But after having felt her pulse, and laid her hand upon the heated brow, a serious shade passed over his features.

"She has a very high fever," he said; "how long since she was taken,"

"Only a few hours," Martha replied.

After another and more searching examination of her symptoms, he sat down to deal out some medicine, and gave directions for its administration.

"I cannot decide conclusively as to the nature of the disease as yet—but I think it will prove to be brain fever. I can tell by morning, and will call early," he said, rising to depart.

"But, doctor," said Martha, in a trembling voice, "isn't brain fever very dangerous?"

"Oh, well—it is generally considered so—but then don't be alarmed; will try and conquer it. I have never lost a case with it yet. Good night," and the doctor bowed himself out.

Morning confirmed Doctor Brown's supposition of the night previous. Effie was now delirious, and tossed sleeplessly upon her pillow—her large black eyes staring wildly about, yet seeming to observe nothing; her cheeks flushed with the fever heat to a purplish crimson, and her dark hair, which Aunt Martha found impossible to comb, was floating wildly about her face.

It is strange how much beauty is sometimes impressed upon the face by the disease that threatens to cut off youth, beauty and life together.

Effie had never looked so truly beautiful as now; and James and Martha watched over her with a painful unexpressed feeling of self-reproach in their hearts, which, interpreted into words, would have been that she had by them never been half appreciated.

Several days passed by and she grew no better. Skillful physicians were sent for from a distance as counsel; but they were alike incapable of checking the progress of the disease. At length, however, it seemed arrested.—The child lay in a kind of stupor, unconscious of everything, and scarcely moving a finger; but there was a perceptible change. They flattered themselves that, as she was not growing worse, she must certainly be better.

One morning, as Martha was sitting by the bedside, Effie looked up intelligently—the wild, unmeaning stare was gone.

"Aunt Martha," she said, in a faint and trembling tone.

"What is it, Effie?" and Martha bent over her with a heart swelling with hope and thankfulness.

"I want to see Uncle James."

"Yes, darling, I will call him," and she bent down and kissed Effie's forehead before leaving her.

"Effie is much better this morning; she is sensible and wants to see you," said Martha, as she entered the kitchen where James was seated at the breakfast-table.

James arose quickly and a happy smile passed like a sunbeam over his stern features. At this moment Doctor Brown entered the room.

"How is the child this morning?" he inquired, as he drew off his gloves and deposited his hat upon the stand.

"Martha was just telling me that she was better," said James, as he followed Martha, and preceded the doctor to Effie's room.

They all went up to the bedside. She looked up into their faces, smiling faintly, as she recognized the doctor. He did not smile in return. He took the little wasted hand in his a moment, and then gently putting it down, walked rapidly away to the window.

"Uncle James," said Effie, in a voice hardly above a whisper, "and Aunt Martha, I have seen mamma, and she wants me to come up there; and Effie looked through the window upwards into the clear blue morning sky, with eyes which seemed to fathom its depths. "I wanted to say good bye to you before I went, and she grasped a hand of each in her little skeleton fingers."

James turned to the doctor, who stood looking on with pitying eyes, and understood the mute unspoken appeal. He shook his head, and then, as Martha looked up imploringly, said, tremulously,
 "She is dying."

Dying! A moment of mad unbelief, and then as conviction pierced their hearts—of silent horror. James sank into a chair and covered his face with his hands, while deep sobs shook his frame.

"Oh, Effie! Effie! my darling!" exclaimed Martha, as she bent over her, "do not leave us, Effie, my child; we cannot live without you!" and her tears fell like rain upon the little hand which was even now growing cold.

The child's dark eyes were fixed mournfully upon them; a gray shadow crept over her face; her lips moved; and, in a voice broken by short, quick gasps for breath, she said—
 "I must—go to—mamma. The windows—of Heaven—are—open."

A few more hurried gasps and all was over. Effie had gone, and the beautiful form lying so cold and still—while bitter tears of anguish and despair bathed its pale face—was but inanimate clay.

With the grief of those lonely ones our pen has naught to do; but for ourselves, when death has torn away our heart's idol, let us remember that the windows of Heaven are open.

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