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THE FLOOD.

The rhythmic ring of a horse's hoofs
Echoes along the city street,
And the idle crowd swarms out to see
Who can the reckless rider be.
With bloodless face and blazing eyes
He dashes on, and wildly cries:
'Fly, for the river's wrath is near!
Fly, for the Flood—the Flood is here!'

He passes, and they stand amazed:
Then jest, and deem the rider crazed—
Some mischief-breeding adophile—
Then turn and see, and fly—too late!

With a moan and a groan,
With a shriek and a roar,
Down on the town
The waters pour—
A shivering crash,
And it is no more!

The torrent sweeps on its changeless path,
Grinding the puny walls like chaff,

In its awful play.

Like straws before the fresh'ning breeze,
Like sands beneath the beating seas,
They pass away.

The seething whirlpool boils and foams
Above a thousand ruined homes,
And in its bosom sped,
All ghastly in the waning light,
Are borne into the coming night
An army of the dead.

III.

Tears for the souls that passed away;
But charity for those
Whose all was lost that bitter day;
Whose call for pity goes
Up from hearts that are sad and sore
And laden down with woes;
Tears for the lives that are no more,
But charity for those.

—*Glen MacDonough, in New York World.*

THE OLD-CLO' MAN.

"Oh, such pretty vases, mamma!" said Fanny, nearly throwing herself out of the window, in her eagerness to look after an old-clothes man, who with his bag upon his shoulder, and his basket of brittle ware upon his arm, was just at that moment passing the door. "Such pretty, pretty vases! Do let me have one, mamma!"

Now, I never, on any account, encourage one of those people. I have hitherto made it a positive rule never to allow one of them to cross my threshold. Yet, somehow, Fanny's eyes—they are just like Psalter's—looked so coaxingly into mine that, before I had taken a moment to consider about it, I opened the door, and the minute I did so, of course, the old-clothes man came straight up the stairs, with his "Old clo' old shoen! Enny tings to change dis mornin', laty?"

As I had opened the door, I thought it could do no harm to humor Fanny, just for once, you know; so, telling the man to wait a moment, and bidding Fanny, in a whisper, not to leave the hall until I came back (for I was afraid the man might meddle with something while was I was gone), I ran upstairs, and was soon engaged in inspecting the contents of a musty old wardrobe in the lumber room.

There was an old office coat of Psalter's, terribly out at elbows; an old vest of Brother John's totally destitute of pockets; a little frock of Fanny's, which she had outgrown a year before; and a broche shawl of my own, which had been spotted with rain, and which I had placed in the wardrobe in a fit of impatience, pretending to myself that it was utterly ruined. It was the only thing of any value there, and, in fact, it was so good that I hesitated about producing it on the present occasion. I turned it about and looked at it over and over again. The center was the only part which was stained. I could rip the border off and have it dyed, and my shawl would be as good as new again. But then it was so much trouble, and I had a very pretty shawl and a cloak and beaded wrap besides. Still, I did feel afraid that it would be wrong to dispose of it for next to nothing.

While I was deliberating on the subject, I heard some one behind me say: "Why don't you come, mamma?" and there, if you'll believe me, stood that disobedient child, notwithstanding I had told her not to leave the hall on any account. There she was, and the old clothes-man was alone downstairs. I declare I had half a mind to shake her well.

I ran downstairs immediately. There stood the peddler just where I had left him, rubbing his hands one over the other, and looking so steadfastly at nothing that he really seemed to have a cast in one of his eyes and a squint in the other. Ugh! what a villainous-looking face he had—it absolutely made me shudder. He lifted the coat from the chair upon which I had laid it, and held it at arm's length with a supercilious air.

"Ah!" he said, "dat is goot for nothings, laty. Dat is not goot for rags. I got very pretty tings in my basket. Laty, any old clo's, old shoes—anything else, laty? Little laty, want pretty tings out uv my basket?"

"Here's a frock," said Fanny, "and a vest of Uncle John's, and a shawl of ma's."

"Ah!" grunted the man. "The frock is no good—not worth nothings. The vest was no use mit me. The shawl was leetle petter, laty. Vot you vant for him?"

"I want a pretty vase," said Fanny.

"Ah! leetle laty," said the peddler, "I makes no monish mit you—you too hard on me. Vell, vell, I takes de clo's. Dey is worth nothing, most nothing, laty, and I will give you dis vase. I make myself poor bargain, leetle laty. Ugh! I make no monish mit you;" and with innumerable jerks and moves and gesticulations he thrust a little vase, with a very gaudy pattern printed on the front, into the child's hand and began to gather up the articles from the floor where he had dropped them.

Just then I happened to glance through the window, and saw to my chagrin two of my most fashionable acquaintances coming up the street; and really, for the moment, I would not have cared how much the man had cheated me, so that I got him out of the house before they came up. He did go at last, although he came back after they were in the hall to say:

"Next time you has petter tings, lady; then we make petter bargains. I make no monish mit you this day, laty. Good-by. I come next week—den you hash petter tings."

At which speech Mrs. Japonica rolled up her eyes and asked me what the man meant; and Miss Cornelius Japonica—"wondered I didn't move nearer Fifth avenue, where I would not be subject to the intrusions of such people."

The Japonicas stood a good while and talked away about all manner of fashionable nothings—the last concert and the last party at Mrs. Highflyer's—how sweetly Screeholini sang, and how elegantly Miss Wilkins was dressed the other day. By the time they went Clara and Rosa and Dick were home from school, and Fanny was crying for lunch. So my time was pretty well occupied for an hour or more, and I forgot all about the old peddler until Rosa began to fidget about the room and rummage my workbox and desk for something she had lost.

"What are you looking for, Rosa?" I said, rather impatiently, as she overset a box of cotton. "I wish you would be more careful."

"It's all Fanny's fault, ma. I told her not to touch it till I came home," answered Rosa.

"I don't care, said Fanny; "it was mine, too."

"It was more mine," said Rosa, "because I'm the biggest—war'a it, ma?"

"What are you speaking of?" I inquired. "What was more yours?"

"Why, the money pa gave us to play store with," said Rosa. "The bank-bill, you know, ma."

Psalter had received a bad \$5 bill some time before, and, after marking it with red ink, had kept it in his pocketbook until a few days before, when he gave it to the children as a plaything. I had seen it in Fanny's hand that very morning, just before the clothes man passed the window, and the moment I remembered that I guessed where the note had vanished.

"Did you have it when you saw your little vase in the man's basket, Fanny?" I said.

"Oh yes, ma!" said Fanny. "I recollect now, I put it on the hall table when I opened the door. I'll go and look there."

She went, but of course didn't find it.

I do declare I had to laugh when I

thought how disappointed the old peddler would feel when he found out that the bill was worthless. I quite enjoyed it.

My merriment was shortened, however;

for not fifteen minutes after I discovered

that a new vest of Psalter's, which he

had only brought home the day before,

and which I had laid upon my work-bas-

ket until I should find time to set the

buckle at the back a little farther for-

ward, was missing. I searched every-

where, but the vest was nowhere in the

house. Such a beautiful thing as it was,

too, and Psalter had given more for it

than I had ever known him to give for a

vest before, because he admired it so—

to think that it should be lost through my

own foolish carelessness, for of course I

knew that old peddler had it! I never

felt so distressed in all my life about such

a thing. I would far rather have lost my own velvet bonnet, or even my best dress. I would willingly have had my hair cut short off all the way round, like a boy's, to have had it back again, and I'm sure I couldn't say more than that.

Glad as I always am to hear Psalter's step upon the sidewalk, I almost dreaded to hear it that night, for I should have to tell him all about it; and though I knew he wouldn't scold, yet, dear me! I did feel so ashamed of my stupidity.

The first thing Fanny did when she heard father getting his latch-key into the key-hole was to run, with her vase in her hand, down to the entry to show her bargain to him, and, tripping over the rug, down she came just as he opened the door, smashing the china and cutting her poor little lip terribly. There was an end of the vase, and her lamentations over her broken toy and cut lip were deafening, and while trying to soothe her I forgot all about the peddler and vest both for a little time. Peace was restored, and I was just filling the teapot, when Brother John arrived, looking exceedingly complacent, and carrying a parcel under his arm, which he laid upon the sofa.

"What is in that paper, Uncle John?" said Fanny, inquisitive as usual, trying to untie the cord which fastened the package. "That is my new vest, Fan," said John, untying the string himself. At the word "vest," my heart sank like a lump of lead. "Oh, dear!" I thought, "the time is coming. I must tell now, very soon." "It is just like yours, Psalter," said John. "You know how I admired that. Well, by a rare piece of good fortune, an old fellow offered me just such a one this morning, and I bought it. I don't believe you could tell the two apart."

And he held up a vest so like Psalter's that it seemed absolutely the same.

The old fellow had a lovely shawl, which he said was a wonderful bargain—only \$5! It is just the color of the one you were so partial to, that was stained or spotted, or something, so I thought I'd bring it up to you."

He held it toward me; but when I took it in my hand, good gracious! it was—no, it couldn't be—yes, it absolutely was—the very shawl I had given to the old peddler man for Fanny's vase. The spots were taken out and it had been brushed and ironed, but it was the very same.

John did not notice my agitation, but went on:

"I think my vest came to less than yours did, Psalter. Let me see. I gave him a \$10 note, and he gave me this in change. I hope it is good."

And John drew from his pocket a note marked with red ink on the back.

"Why, Uncle John," cried Rosa, the moment her eyes fell upon the bill, "where did you find my money?"

"Your money, child?" cried John, astonished. "Your money?"

"Yes, uncle—my bad money that pa

gave me to play with. Don't you see the red letters on the back—bad—that pa put

there?"

John turned the note over on the other side.

"The child is right," he said. "What does all this mean?"

While he was looking at the note with all his might I reached over and picked up the vest, turned it on the wrong side, and there, sure enough, were Psalter's initials, written in indelible ink by my own hands that very morning.

"Of whom did you buy these things, John?" I asked.

"Oh, didn't I tell you?" said John.

"An old man who said he kept a large

clothing store, but being in poor circum-

stances was obliged to peddle off the re-

mainder of his stock himself."

"Had he a nose like our parrot's beak

and eyebrows that went up so?" said

Fanny, making two little right angles

with her forefingers over her eyes; "be-

cause if he had, it's our old clothes man,

and he got that bill off the hall table."

"Why—what—I can't make this out,"

said John, completely bewildered.

"What do you mean by 'our old clothes

man,' Fanny?"

"Why, a man came to the door with

pretty things in a basket," said Fanny,

"and ma gave him a shawl and an old

coat for my pretty vase that I broke just

now; and after he had gone we found

that he had stolen pa's vest and my bad

money, uncle."

"Yes, John," I put in, "and he must

have gone straight down town after he left

me and sold the articles to you, for that is

the only way in which I can account for the

fact of your having brought them up

again just as I had made up my mind that

I had bidden good-bye to them forever."

John's astonishment beggared description. He stood open-mouthed, rumpling his hair with both hands for more than ten minutes; and then—but no matter what he said. Suffice it to say that such invectives of vengeance on the whole race of old clothes speculators were never before uttered, and that those hurled on the head of the particular one in question amounted to anathemas.

The first thing Fanny did when she heard father getting his latch-key into the key-hole was to run, with her vase in her hand, down to the entry to show her bargain to him, and then—both those hurled on the head of the particular one in question amounted to anathemas.

Every tale should have a moral, and remember well the one affixed to this in sugar.

A new system of universal telegraphic language is proposed.

Russian army officials are experimenting with speaking trumpets for giving orders.

A Buffalo (N. Y.) physician says that

there are times when every man has suicidal tendencies.

A new agricultural machine distributes manures and insecticides and sows grain by means of an air blast.

A balloon 600 or 700 yards above the ground, is claimed to be perfectly safe from small arm and artillery fire.

The deepest artesian well in Russia opens with a depth of 2090 feet. The sinking operations took two years.

The Mexican Government has com-

misioned two eminent physicians to study

the cremation of the dead in Europe.

Edison has just patented a clock,

which, when it reaches 12 o'clock,

shouts out "dinner time," 1 o'clock,

etc.

It is stated that at New Orleans a dozen

samples of bleached paper of fine quality

produced from sugar cane are being ex-