

"In the Midst of Life."

[Relating to John P. Dauberman, dec'd late of Northumberland, Pa.]

BY R. WERTZ.

His soul has departed! The world still moves on; But a bright light has gone out in the midst of our town; A man of true worth in the vigor of life, Has been called by the Lord from earth's toil and strife.

His fellow-men mourn as he looks on his sight, For a blessing that brightened has taken its flight. In the midst of life's duties and those to his God, We have laid him to rest 'neath the snow-covered sod.

In the midst of the Church a light has gone out, Where in worship of God he was sincere and devout. A pillar has fallen! the loss the church feels; But with faith she submits and silently kneels.

A light has gone out—the great light of home; In the midst of his family no more he'll be found; God pity the children,—be their Father and God; Give grace to the widow to "pass under the rod."

This another true lesson to one and to all, "In the midst of life" the death angel doth call; And while we cherish the memory of him gone before, May we watch and be ready when Death comes to our door.

NELLIE'S ADVENTURE.

I lingered a few minutes until the people were massed round the luggage-vans at the end of the train; and then, being convinced that my uncle had not yet arrived, I moved away a few steps, when a hand closed sharply over mine that held the cage, and my persecutor whisked with an unobtrusive insolence, his lips almost touching my ear—

"Pray, allow me to assist you." I shook him off, so violently that the poor birds fluttered in terror for five minutes afterwards, and hurried off to the luggage-van. My trunks were already on the platform, waiting to be claimed; so getting them placed on a truck, I ordered a porter to engage a cab, determined not to give my uncle a moment's grace.

"A four-wheeler—did you hear me?" I said, with a nervous impatience, for the unmanly wretch was still at my side, and was actually helping the porter to adjust my luggage upon the truck, as if we were traveling together. "Put those trunks on a cab at once. What are you waiting for? I ask!"

"But the gentleman says I'm to take them to the station-master's office," objected the man. "I don't know what to do, I'm sure, ma'am. Are the trunks yours or his?"

"Mine—mine! Of course they are mine!" I answered, raising my voice which quivered with excitement. "This person is a total stranger to me. Will you ask one of the guard, please, to call a policeman, that I may give him into custody?"

"There is a detective from Scotland Yard at your elbow; pray make use of his services, ma'am," replied the gentleman, with a smile that made my blood boil; then, in a voice of impatient command—"Look sharp, porter; take those trunks to the station-master's office at once."

"And the next moment the truck was wheeled away under the wretch's escort, without another dissenting word from me for his unparalleled audacity had struck me dumb for the moment. I turned mechanically to the man at my elbow, a low-sized individual with a red beard and a cunning good-humored face.

"Will you help me?" I cried impulsively, "I am a girl, and quite alone. My uncle Colonel Barton Clark, who was to have met me, has—"

"Hush, hush, my dear young lady!" he interrupted, with repulsive familiarity, laying two fat grimy fingers on my arm. "Don't make a row about it, for it can do no good. Make your mind easy; it's all square enough. I've the warrant to search you here in my pocket. It's all quite square I assure you."

"A warrant to search me! To search me for what?" I demanded dumfounded.

"For Lady Frances Willoughby's diamonds, which were stolen from her dressing case in a hotel in Dawson street Dublin, a fortnight ago. The gentleman who travelled with you from Chester is, you know, her ladyship's second son—"

"It is a mistake—a most unwarranted mistake!" I protested vehemently. "You must be mad, all of you! I am a lady, I tell you. I am Miss Eleanor Holmes—here is my mother's address in Dublin—and I am going to stay with my uncle, Colonel Burton Clark, who was to have met me here, and who will call Mr. Willoughby to sever account for this outrage on a defenseless girl. It is shameful it is unparalleled!"

"So it is—so it is!" he assented, with soothing impertinence. "I am sure Colonel What's-his-name will make him smart for it when he comes. At the same time, it's no use taking on so, my dear. It's all a mistake that'll be cleared up, I'm sure. Well, Dawson, what do you want?" this to a dark sullen-looking man whom I had also seen speaking to Mr. Willoughby. "Oh, ay—the keys! I'd forgotten about them. Yes, yes; I'm telling the young lady it's all a mistake we'll clear up in a jiffy for her. Now give me that bag, my dear, and that pretty purse—calmly taking them from my paralyzed hands handing them to his confederate—"that's the way to work—no fuss, no nonsense—there's a good girl!"—and the bird cage. Dawson where's your manners, to let a lady carry an object like that about a public station? Fie, fie!"

"I darted away from them, and ran toward the street to see if there was any sign of my uncle; but, before I had reached the big station gates, I heard the odious little creature puffing by my side and jeeringly reproaching me for my desertion of him.

"I waited for a few minutes; but, seeing no sign of my relative, I returned to the platform and bade my companion take me to the station-master's office.

"Shall I ever forget the scene that greeted me there? My trunks were both unpacked, and chairs, table and floor were littered with their contents; my best bonnet was suspended from a dirty chandelier my white tulle ball dress, tenderly swathed by my mother in one of her finest linen sheets, was spread out on the floor, and kneeling besides it was the man Dawson, engaged in leisurely turning over the pages of my album with damp, dirty fingers—"

"The hero of this disagreeable occurrence was standing apart at one of the windows; and, when my wrathful eyes met his, he actually had the grace to look a little ashamed of himself, and began stammering something that might have been considered an attempt at apology had I inclined myself to listen to him.

"Sir, I said, breaking in with a thrilling vibration of voice which I afterward learned had a most crushing effect, do not presume to speak to me. Any explanation of your conduct which you may find it expedient to give must be addressed to my uncle and guardian, who is at present in London, and who, I know, will deeply resent and avenge the unpardonable insult offered to a defenseless girl who never offended you."

"Pausing momentarily for breath and for something even yet more annihilating to say; to my great joy I heard uncle Ned's voice, and, darting out, I threw myself into his arms.

"It was some time before he could make head or tail of my incoherent complaint; at last, leading me to a seat, he said impatiently.

"My dear child, one moment, or I shall believe that you have lost your head. You tell me you have been detained here at this station and your trunks examined by a brace of detectives for some diamonds stolen from a Lady Francis Willoughby, and what have you to do with her?" "Nothing, nothing; I don't know her, have never even seen the woman. My mother, I believe, knew her just a little when she was a girl. She came to Dublin for the Drawing-room this year, and on the night before her diamonds, a necklace, earrings and coronet, worth over six thousand pounds, were stolen from the hotel where she was staying, and no trace of the thieves was ever found, though suspicion attached to a maid whom she had engaged in London, and who is supposed to have been in league with a band of professional thieves, for she disappeared next day and cannot be found anywhere."

"Well, I don't understand yet. What you or your mother to say to the business?"

"Nothing, nothing. I don't understand anything yet myself, except that Mr. Willoughby, seeing me shrink under his insolent stare at Chester and try to avoid him, took it into his head I was escaping with his mother's diamonds, and telegraphed for two detectives to meet me here with a search warrant."

"Why, the man must be a raving lunatic! I'll have him committed at once! Take me to him, quick, child, quick!" I cried my uncle, starting up with flaming face, and clutching his sword-cane as he did so. "Lead the way, Nell!"

"At the office door, which he forced open with a kick, for uncle Ned is very violent when roused, he thrust me back, to my disgust, for I was just as excited as he.

"No, no, child; this is no place for you! Keep back; you must not face those cowardly scoundrels again; stay outside, like a good girl!"

"I could have almost tried with disappointment, for my blood was up, and I felt quite equal to taking my part in the denouement.

"I stood as close to the door as I could; but the noise of an engine that was letting off steam in the station prevented my hearing anything but a word here and there, though my uncle was following at the top of his voice and evidently having it all his own way. However, I could follow the altercation with the help of such expressions as 'cowardly ruffian,' 'dastardly outrage,' 'most infamous, audacious abuse of the law I ever,' 'will have the case before parliament before the end of the session,' 'no lady able to travel if the constitution sanction—' A departing shriek from the engine drowned everything else, and, when the station was quiet again, my uncle had ceased speaking and Mr. Willoughby was evidently having the last word to let it out of his hands for a moment until I had put it into her sister's keeping on my way from the railway station."

"I see through it all; it's as plain as a pikestaff!" burst in Mr. Willoughby, scowling stealthily, while a rather cynical smile dawned on the detectives' countenances. "You have been made a regular cat's paw of, Miss Holmes. The little thief must have seen and recognized me at Chester, or have received some intimation of my presence from her accomplices, then believing naturally that the station was swarming with detectives, cleverly adopting the plan of making you, whose appearance would be a protection against any but a hot-headed, mole-eyed idiot like myself, convey her plunder to safe quarters in London, where, we all know, the city once reached, it would be lost forever. By Jove, it was a stroke of genius! I have never heard anything like it! And to think, Colonel Clark, that but for your outbreak of, of, hem! righteous indignation it would all have remained undiscovered! Miss Holmes would have calmly handed over the cage to Mrs. O'Toole's agents in Cook's Court!"

"All's well that ends well," I whispered to my uncle, who, poor man, seemed quite dazed by the extraordinary adventure! "Had we not better be going? I do want my breakfast, uncle Ned!"

"So a few minutes later a four-wheeler was bearing me westwards at last. And that, dear girls, is the true and faithful account of my journey from North Wall to Easton in the year eighteen hundred and, and, we don't mind the decimals!"

Here Mrs. Sackville shook her pretty blonde hair and gazed with rapturous retrospection into the fire, as if she was recalling an incident contemporary with the R form Bill or the battle of Waterloo, which made us all laugh.

"But surely that is not all? Your adventure must have an epilogue of some kind. The thieves were discovered, were they not? Surely you did not allow Mrs. O'Toole to escape with your lace scarf?" broke in two or three of the party.

"Alas, neither Mrs. O'Toole, nor my scarf, nor any of the parties connected with the robbery was ever faintly traced. For when the police besieged 28, Cook's Court, they found the place had been deserted. The seizure and examination of my property having probably got wind of it, I jumped into the train, and escaped every one."

"What a shame! Well, how about Mr. Willoughby? Did you ever see him again? Did you ever see him again?"

"Mr. Willoughby. Let me see. Did I ever see him again? Yes, I think so, four or five times before we left town," answered Mrs. Sackville, half stifling a yawn. "He called, you know to try to induce my uncle to forgive him."

"Well, and did he?"

"Not for a long time, months, years. He followed me—I mean my uncle, you know—down into Devonshire that summer."

"And eventually he was forgiven?"

"Eventually—yes, as well as I can remember."

"Mrs. Sackville," suddenly cried the young lady called Kate, who had conducted the examination, "you married the man Willoughby was your husband's name before he came in for his uncle's estates. I remember perfectly—Herbert Willoughby. Oh, what a sly-boots you are! You actually married him, and were going to let us off without the cream of the story! Shame, shame!"

"And the diamonds you wore at the fancy ball last night, which every one was talking about, broke in three or four voices eagerly, "were the very ones you carried in the cage from Chester to London?"

"They were," assented Mrs. Sackville, reviving a little as the gentleman came trooping in. "I married him for them."

Wealth in Marriage.

To a congregation that filled every part of the vast auditorium of the Brooklyn Tabernacle, Dr. Talbot, recently delivered the second of his series of sermons to the women of America. He took for his text 1st Samuel xxv., 2, his subject being the practice of marrying simply for the sake of social position. He dwelt mainly upon the unhappiness prevailing in households, where in spite of wealth and rich surroundings congenial infelicity exists.

"A drunken sot wins the heart of a woman, and during a parenthesis of sobriety he leads her to the altar and pledges himself to love and protect her, and she is made his wife. But as soon as he has her in his power he asserts himself and makes her his slave. She is only a woman anyhow, is his excuse for ill treating her."

"Women marry for worldly success without regard for moral character. Is he a good, congenial, honest man? should be the first question a woman should ask herself before casting her lot for a man."

"People should be provided with money sufficient to live comfortably. The whole tendency of sin is toward poverty—the whole tendency of success is toward righteousness. It is a grand thing to have plenty of money; to have all you want; to have a fine library and good surroundings. There is no virtue in being poor if we can honestly be rich."

"Indelity is inept insanity—all infidels are cranks. Many people pretend to despise the Christian religion, but they are all hypocrites. Religion is the grandest thing for worldly and spiritual prosperities. Women marry for money and society looks on and applauds. One big dollar placed before the eye will shut out a desert of sin. The greatest villain on earth is the man who takes a woman from a good home and treats her like a dog. What American society most needs now is to have the gentle villain exterminated."

One Day's Grace.

"I'd like to report, sah, dat my wife ar' missin'," said an old colored man who came to the Gratiot avenue station the other day.

"Well, since how long?"

"Bout nine days, sah."

"Under what circumstances?"

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