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JOHN G. HALL,  
EDITOR & PROPRIETOR.

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## The Bridal Wine-Glass.

'Pledge with wine—pledge with wine,' cried the young and thoughtless Harvey Wood; 'pledge with wine,' ran through the brilliant crowd.

The beautiful bride grew pale—the decisive hour had come. She pressed her white hands together, and the leaves of the bridal wreath trembled on her pure brow; her breath came quicker, her heart beat wider.

Yes, Marion, lay aside your scruples for this once, said the Judge in a low tone, going towards his daughter, 'the company expect it; do not so seriously infringe upon the rules of etiquette; in your own home act as you please, but in mine, for this once, please me.'

Every eye was turned towards the bridal path, Marion's principles were well known. Henry had been a convict, but of late his friends noted the change in his manners, the difference in his habits—and to-night they watched him to see, as they sneeringly said, if he was tied down to a woman's apron so soon.

Pouring a brimming beaker, they held it with tempting smiles towards Marion. She was still very pale, though more composed; and her hand shook not, as smiling back, she gracefully accepted the crystal tempter, and raised it to her lips. But scarcely had she done so, when every hand was arrested by her piercing exclamation of 'Oh how terrible!'

'What is it?' cried one and all thronging together; for she had slowly carried the glass at arms length, and was fixedly regarding it as though it were some hideous object.

'Wait,' she answered, while an inspired light shone from her dark eyes, 'wait, and I will tell you.' 'I see,' she added, slowly, pointing one jewelled finger at the sparkling ruby liquid—a sight that beggars all description; and yet listen—I will point it for you if I can. It is a lonely spot; tall mountains crowned with verdure rise in awful sublimity around; a river runs through, and bright flowers grow to the water's edge. There is a thick, warm mist, that the sun seeks mainly to pierce. Trees, lofty and beautiful, wave to the airy motion of birds; but there—a group of Indians gather; they sit to and fro with something like sorrow upon their dark brows. And in their midst lies a manly form—but his cheek how deathly, his eye wild with the fitful fire of fever. One friend stands beside him—nay, I should say kneels; for see, he is pillowing that poor head upon his breast.

Genius in ruins—oh! the high, holy, looking brow! why should death mark it? and he so young. Look how he throws back the damp curls! see him clasp his hands! hear his thrilling shrieks for life; mark how he clutches at the form of his companion, imploring to be saved. Oh! hear him call piteously his father's name—see him twine his fingers together as he shrieks for his sister—his only sister—the twin of his soul—weeping for him in his own native land.

'See!' she exclaimed, while the par. shrank back, the untasted wine trembling in their faltering grasp, and the Judge fell, overpowered, upon his seat—see! his arms are lifted to heaven—he prays, how wildly, for mercy! hot fever rushes through his veins. The friend beside him is weeping; awe-stricken, the dark men move silently away, and leave the living and dying together.

There was a hush in that princely parlor, broken only by what seemed a smothered sob from some manly bosom. The bride stood yet upright, with quivering lip, and tears stealing to the outward edge of her lashes. Her beautiful arm had lost its tension, and the glass, with its little troubled red waves came slowly towards this range of her vision. She spoke again, every lip was mute. Her voice was slow and faint, yet awfully distinct; she still fixed her sorrowing glance upon the wine cup.

'It is evening now; the great white moon is coming up and its beams lay gently on his forehead. He moves not; his eyes are set in their sockets; dim are their piercing glances; in vain his friend whispers the name of father and

sister—death is there. Death—and no soft hand, no gentle voice to bless and soothe him. His head sinks back! one convulsive shudder! and he is dead!'

A groan ran through the assembly, so vivid was her description, so unearthly, by her look, so inspired her manner—that—when she described, seemed actually to have taken place then and there. They noticed also that the bridegroom had his face in his hands and was weeping.

'Dead!' she repeated again, her lips quivering faster, and her voice more and more broken; 'and there they scoop him a grave; and there, without a shroud, they lay him down in that damp, reeking earth. The only son of a proud father, the only, the idolized brother of a fond sister. And he sleeps to-day in that distant country, with no stone to mark the spot. There he lies—my father's son—my own twin brother! a victim to this deadly poison. Father,' she exclaimed, turning suddenly, while the tears rained down her beautiful cheeks, 'father, shall I drink it now?'

The form of the old Judge was convulsed with agony. He raised not his head, but in a smothered voice he faltered—'no, no, my child, in God's name—no.'

She lifted the glittering goblet, and letting it fall to the floor, it was dashed in a thousand pieces. Many a tearful eye watched her movement, and instantaneously every wine glass was transferred to the marble table on which it had been prepared. Then as she looked at the fragments of crystal, she turned to the company, saying, 'let no friend hereafter, who loves me, tempt me to peril my soul for wine. Not firmer are the everlasting hills than my resolve, God helping me, never to touch or taste that terrible poison. And he to whom I have given my hand—who watched over my brother's dying form in that last solemn hour, and buried the dear wanderer there by the river in that land of gold, will, I trust, sustain me in that resolve—will you not, my husband?'

His glistening eyes, his sad, sweet smile, was her answer. The Judge left the room and when an hour after he returned, and with a more subdued manner took part in the entertainment of the bridal guests, no one could fail to read that he, too, had determined to banish the enemy at once, and forever from his princely home.

Those who were present at that wedding, can never forget the impressions so solemnly made—many from that hour forswore the social glass.

## The Grocer's Story.

Ours was a quiet street at most times—a lazy, shady place, where the green blinds were forever closed, and where there was so little passing that spears of grass grew here and there between the flagstones, and the stone curbs of the iron railed areas were fringed with soft green moss. A very quiet place at most times, but late one autumn afternoon a strange cry sounded through it, which awakened all its echoes, and called curious faces to the doors and windows.

'Stop thief! stop thief!'

The strong voice of a policeman uttered the cry at first, and the shrill treble of two boys at play near by took it up and repeated it, and by-and-by there was a full deep chorus, like the cry of a pack of hounds—a sound you might have known at any distance, however ignorant you were of the language, to be the cry of men who hunted something.

Policemen with their clubs, errand boys with bundles, bakers with baskets on their arms, young gentlemen just released from the academy close at hand, and ragged urchins, whose school house was the gutter, all joined together in the hot pursuit, and followed the miserable object with bare, begrimed feet and hatless head, that flitted along before them with speed which only fear could lend to one so worn and wretched—a speed which kept the crowd a long way off, and made the burliest of his pursuers pant for breath.

They were out of sight in a moment, but in a little while the cry was heard that the thief had baffled them, and some amongst the crowd rushed back to

see if their prey had doubled on his track; and others sulkily and indignantly with the result of their useless chase, came back muttering angrily or swearing, with many violent oaths, that they would have him yet. One policeman, a well fed fellow with a crimson face, made quite a hero to himself by asserting that he knew the fellow, and would trip him before sun-down. There was a good deal of sympathy for the gentleman who had lost his pocket-handkerchief, but none that I could hear for the poor, degraded wretch who had pursued him, until a placid voice at my elbow uttered the following words, apparently in soliloquy:

'Well, I may be wrong, but I somehow hope they won't catch him.'

I turned in surprise, and I confronted our grocer, on whose steps I had sought shelter from the crowd, which at such a moment, could not be expected to think much of the safety of a woman.

Our grocer was a portly man, with a shining bald head, fringed by a ring of white hair, like the tuncure of a Roman Catholic priest, and wearing at the moment a Holland apron and a short, blue jacket.

'Yes'm' I went on, 'I really hope the miserable, starved-looking creature will get off.'

'Then you don't believe he picked the gentleman's pocket,' said I.

'I'm afraid it's only too certain that he did, ma'am,' said the man, shaking his head. 'He looked straight at me as he passed, and he had hungry, desperate eyes that looketh like theft, and murder too, for that matter.'

'And yet you wish him to escape, when he has broken the laws of the land, and will probably do so again?'

'God forbid that I should help to break the laws,' said the old grocer. 'Good men made them, and they are right; but there are other laws that I read in my old Bible on Sunday nights, that seem to be as binding. One of them is—Do unto others as you would that others should do unto you; and another, 'Love thy neighbor as thyself.' When I remember these words, I think that you may be too hard with a poor sinful fellow-being, and not go beyond the limits of the law either.'

'That rich gentleman who had his pocket picked, will go home to a fine dinner and a bottle of wine, no doubt, and the wretch of a thief may have a crust of bread and a glass of burning gin, if he can sell or pawn what he stole for enough to get them. Somehow, if I couldn't have him hunted down to-night—I vow I wouldn't.'

'Still, I don't blame those young fellows: I'd have been as furious in the chase as any of 'em years ago; but I learnt a lesson once that I never have forgotten, and hope I never may. I was a young man, and a poor one then, and had a hard struggle to make my little shop keep my little family. It was only by pinching and saving, and keeping a sharp look out for every bargain, that I managed it at all.'

'We lived in a shabby street, and had only very poor customers. A loaf of bread, a quarter of a pound of butter, and two ounces of black tea was quite an order, and most of those who came wanted trust.'

'As for laying in fine fruit or vegetables, I never thought of such folly. Diamonds would have been as salable in that part of the city, where washerwomen and the poorest laboring men were the aristocracy.'

'Now and then, when a foreign ship came to port with a load of ruined pineapples, or decayed oranges, I bought a lot of these, and charging next to nothing, sold them easily enough. Although, I own my wife used to say the miserable babies, who rolled about the gutters, died off faster after every stock of damaged foreign fruit I sold in the old shop, and I'm afraid that she was right. Well, as I told you, I struggled along as best I might, and after a while things began to improve, and I began to have visions of a clean store in a good street, when I laid down to rest at night.'

'So one day when I had been to market I brought home half a dozen hams and hung them up about the door, more for show than anything else, for hams were a grand holiday dinner in

those regions, and not an everyday affair I can tell you. They went off slowly, as I thought they would. Now and then some one would come in for a pound, and once I sold half of the smallest one to a woman who wanted it for her Sunday dinner. She was to pay me on Monday morning, but she never did for on Sunday night her husband killed her with a rum bottle, and they took her body past my shop with its poor head all beaten out of shape and bloody.

'And so the hams hung there through the summer and through the fall, and quite on into the winter.'

'It was just as the December nights began to grow long and dark and cold, that I noticed a new policeman on our beat—a young handsome looking fellow, with very bright eyes, but with such thin cheeks and hands, although he seemed to be powerfully built and made for a rather stout man, that I could not help watching him, and wondering whether he had been ill or not. The first time that I noticed him was about sunset, and he passed and repassed my window a dozen times, looking all the while straight at those hams, which dangled from the frame of the awning.

'I hope he means to buy one,' I said to my wife, as we sat together over the tea table; 'and I shouldn't wonder if he did for he seems to have taken quite a fancy for them.'

'But the evening passed, and though I saw him every now and then on the other side of the way, looking across with his bright eyes straight at the hams, he did not come in or speak to me on the subject. And so I made up my mind that he would send for it in the morning, and somehow made sure of it that whenever I saw a decent looking woman go by with a basket on her arm, I said, 'That's the policeman's wife coming after the ham.' I was mistaken, however, and after the street lamps were lighted that night I began to see the man pacing up and down, with his eyes still fixed as they had been the night previous upon the hams. Once he caught me peeping at him, and then he turned so red and looked at me with such a wolfish glitter in his eyes, that I grew angry and said to myself, 'It's well that keeping unsalable articles isn't a crime in this country, for it was I should expect to be arrested.' So I gave him back his look, turned on my heel and walked back into shop. I did not see him again that night; but long after everything had been taken in and locked up, and I was snug in bed, I heard a tramp, tramp, tramp, upon the pavement, and knew it was the new policeman, and that he was looking at the hams where the hams hung, as well as though I had seen him.'

'On the third evening he was there again; that, you may say, was no wonder, for it was his duty to be upon that beat and no other; but it was curious that he should keep on staring at those hams with those bright, wolfish eyes of his. I didn't like it, though I could not have said why. A vessel had been wrecked at sea about that time, and an extra, with the latest news of the disaster, came out that evening. I bought a paper and sat down behind the counter to read it. It was a stormy night and but few customers came in, and those were easily served, and somehow, between reading and thinking, time passed on, until the clock struck eleven, and I had not yet taken in my goods or put up my shutters.'

'Just as I was about to do so, (in fact I had already put my hand upon the first piece of the shutter,) my door opened and an old woman came in. She was a sallow, miserable creature, known about the place as Irish Kate, and with her red nose and bleared eyes and bloated limbs, was as ugly a figure as any one ever cast eyes on. 'Another dram, I suppose,' I said to myself going behind the bar at once, for I wanted to get rid of her as soon as possible. But she, to my surprise, came close up to me, and put her great red paw upon my arm.'

'I've made a discovery, mister,' she said. 'You've not been keeping as bright a lookout as ye should; there's been a thafe at work without this blessed night.'

'What thief?' I asked.

'More than I can tell ye,' she answered. 'But I think it's a policeman, no less, the blackguard.'

'A policeman,' I cried, and I at once thought of the man I had seen staring at my hams.

'It's too dark to see his face,' she answered. 'But I caught the shine of a star on the coat he has on, and whoever it was took a ham from your pegs and hid it in the ash box beyond the corner. Ye'll find it there, if ye look; and sure ye'll not refuse a sup of whiskey for the information?'

I gave the old creature what she wanted, hurried her out of the shop and put up the shutters, growing angrier every moment.

'If it is the policeman I'll make him pay dearly for it,' as I slunk along the sidewalk to the corner, keeping in shadow all the way, and when I stood by the light of the lamp, close by, that the ham was there, wrapped in something which looked like a handkerchief, I bit my lips and clenched my hands with rage. Had it been a common thief I should not so much have minded; but a policeman! It was more than I could stand. So I crouched myself in a doorway and waited. The watch were relieved at twelve o'clock; I knew that, and knew also that this would be the time when my policeman would come to take the ham from out of its hiding place. And sure enough, when the time came I heard him challenge the man who was to take his place, and come marching down towards the corner. I let him get the ham well under his arm before I started, but then pounced upon him like a tiger.

'I've got you!' I cried. 'Pretty policeman you are indeed, but you shall suffer for it; you shall suffer for it I can tell you.'

He struggled with me for a moment like a wild thing, and then all of a sudden dropped the ham and fell down in a helpless sort of a heap upon the ground.

'I'm a ruined man!' he groaned, 'a ruined man! there's no hope for me now; Oh my God! my wife—my poor little wife!' and he burst out crying, like a woman.

The sight softened me, but I was angry still.

'You should have thought of that before you became a thief,' I said. 'If the guardian of a man's property is not to be trusted, what is to become of him? And you look like a gentleman—you do not seem like a scoundrel, how have you stooped to do such a thing as this?'

He was standing beside me now, and the lamp light fell on his face. It was white as any corpse's and his eyes glittered terribly.

'I'll tell you what made me do it,' he said, 'it was the only thing which could have driven me to act like that; my wife and children are starving I tell you, and I had nothing for them.'

'Policeman's families do not often starve,' I said with a sneer.

'My God! can't you believe me?—I have only been appointed three days;—I have not received a cent of salary yet. I have been ill a long while, and had neither money nor credit. Last night we went to bed supperless; to-day there has not been a crust in the house, and those hams tempted me so. You can never know how awfully they tempted me, and I meant to pay you afterwards.'

He covered his face with his hands, and I could see great tears dripping through his fingers, and before I knew it my own cheeks were moist, and so we stood silent, with the ham lying between us on the ground.

'At last he turned toward me and said, 'Do what you like with me—the last hope is gone.'

But I put my hand on his arm and said, 'God forbid that I should take that last hope from you, that I, of all men should be the one to ruin you. If your story is true—and I believe it is—I pity you more than I blame you.'

He looked at me in a sort of bewildered way, as though he scarcely understood me. I stood me, and I took him by the arm and led him back to the shop. There I filled a basket with bread and butter and coffee, and put the ham on top of all.

'Take it home to your wife,' I said, 'you'll pay me when you get your salary, and if you are in need before that come to me. I'm a poor man myself and I can feel for other poor men.'

I shall never forget that man's face in all my life, so wondering, so thankful and so awe-stricken. All he said was 'God bless you,' but there was a whole sermon in those words, and I slept better for them.

On Christmas night he paid me every cent, and from that day until I left the neighborhood dealt with me regularly. But times grew so much better that I took a store in a good street at the other end of the town, and one way and another saw no more of my policeman for three good years.

One night, just such a night as that on which I first saw him staring on the hams, I was awakened long after midnight by the cry of fire. I started up to see the flames through the floor, and to know the store down stairs was all afire. The stairs were on fire also, and when, as I opened the entry door the hot air rushed in and almost smothered me, I gave up all hope of getting my poor wife and helpless little ones out of that burning building alive and safe.—I was so faint and ill from the accident, you see, that I hadn't all my wits about me, and believed there was no one missing. My blood ran cold, when my wife, clasping her hands, and with an awful look upon her face, screamed:

'Our little Lucy, our little Lucy is left behind.'

She had slept with our hired girl since her little baby brother was born, and the woman in her fright had forgotten her little one. There she was at the top of that burning building, out of the reach of any human help; it seemed to me as I looked up at the walls, a great red and yellow sheet of flame, with blue gleams here and there, as though devilish heads were peeping out and grinning at us. Still, hopeless as it was, I should have gone back into the burning house and saved my baby or died with her if I had been able to stand. No one else would venture. It would be a foolish sacrifice of life they said, for no doubt the child was already smothered by the smoke, and though I raved and pleaded and made wild promises they shook their heads and only bade me have patience.

'Patience!' I thought that I was going mad as the face of my little girl—my sweet, pretty pet—rose up before me. But just then a tall man dashed through the crowd and came towards me.

'Quick!' he shouted, 'which room is the child in—speak quickly—which room?'

'The back one on the upper floor,' I groaned, and he dashed away from me, parting the throng with his strong arms, and in another moment I saw him mounting the ladder. I heard him calling him to come back, bidding him beware, and speaking of him as though he were dead already. But he never heeded them, and as I saw him hidden by the black smoke which poured from the window, I covered my face and prayed that the angels who walked in the fiery furnace might go with him.

'Perhaps they did. Something stronger than an earthly thing must have been there, for in a few minutes—th you seemed years to me then—we saw him coming down the ladder with something in his arms. 'The burnt body of my child, perhaps,' I thought, but as he came closer I saw that it was my own laughing, living darling, with her blue eyes open and her little arms about his neck.

'The roof fell in the next moment, but my treasure was safe and that was all I cared for.'

'What shall I say or do to thank you,' I said, as I grasped his hand. 'I'm a ruined man, and I can only give you my blessing; but let me know your name.'

'Have you forgotten me? don't you remember me?' he said, as he bent over me. 'Look again.'

'I did; and I saw a pair of bright gray eyes, a face I know, and something glittering on his breast. And the scene