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Select Poetry.

ONE BY ONE.

One by one the sands are flowing One by one the moments fall; Some are coming, some are going; Do not strive to grasp them all. One by one thy duties wait thee, Let thy whole strength go to each, Let no future dreams elate thee, Learn thou first what these can teach. One by one (bright gifts from Heaven) Joys are sent thee here below; Take them readily when given, Ready too to let them go. One by one thy griefs shall meet thee Do not fear an armed band; One will fade as others greet thee; Shadows passing through the land. Do not look at life's long sorrow; See how small each moment's pain, God will help thee for to-morrow, So each day begin again. Every hour that fleets so slowly Has its task to do or bear; Luminous the crown, and holy, When each gem is set with care. Do not linger with regretting, Or for passing hours despond; Nor, the daily toll forgetting, Look too eagerly beyond. Hours are golden links, God's token, Reaching heaven; but one by one Take them, lest the chain be broken Ere the pilgrimage be done.

A LAWYER'S STORY.

WHEN old Squire Abbott, of Southford, died, and I became his successor to the legal practice of the town, I was barely six-and twenty. Gilbert was the most influential name in town then. The old Gilbert House stood near the cross-roads, a solid brick mansion, painted cream color, with old yews in the yard, and spacious stables in the rear. What first attracted my attention was a splendid handsome girl riding a blooded horse out of the gates every morning. A servant girl opened and closed them for her; and then, until her return, an unbroken stillness and silence would reign about the place. I used to wonder what the life within those stately walls was. At length I discovered. One morning I received a messenger with a note written on creamy paper, thick and yellow, requesting me to call upon Agatha Gilbert, at the cross-roads, at a certain hour the following day. I took occasion to inquire of a friend who Agatha Gilbert might be. "Why, the old squire's rich client." "Well, who is she?" "I have told you who she is." "What then?" "An eccentric, maiden lady, aged 60, who lives in the house of her forefathers, and worships her money. Though she is sixty years old she is more active and alert than most girls of twenty. Everything is under her direction. She sees everything; knows everything that takes place under her roof. She is whimsical, irascible, and leads those girls a pretty life, I imagine." "What girls?" "Kate and Bessie Staniels. Kate is a beauty, Bessie is a pretty little thing, hardly sixteen. They are the old lady's nieces, born South, and went North when their father died— poor as church mice, and may, or may not, be worth a hundred thousand at the old lady's death." "Which is it I see riding a Black Hawk filly every morning?" "That's Kate. Ain't she a Juno?" "The old lady has her match with her, I

guess. She has been engaged to Rick Lawton two years, and she means to marry him." "Who is Lawton?" "A young doctor in the city." "Why does the old lady object?" "Because he won Kate without her consent." "Characteristic." "Exactly." The next morning I drew rein at the Gilbert gate. A great wolf-dog approached, and after examining me carefully escorted me up the drive. A touch of the hand-bell made the bell peal loudly through the house. In a moment I heard light footsteps approaching and the great door was unbolted from within, and swung back. A young girl, with golden curls about her neck, and very sweet blue eyes, awaited my wishes. I asked for Miss Gilbert, and presented my card. "Oh, yes," she said sweetly. "Aunt Agatha will be ready to see you in a moment. She never keeps people waiting long," she added as she ushered me into a large room wainscoted in mahogany, with horrible old portraits on the walls, and a fire upon the hearth behind a fender. The April air was chill, and I stood before the blaze, getting the stiffness out of my legs, when the door opened quickly, and a little, withered woman in black entered. She was evidently near-sighted and came peering across the room at me, without speaking a word. I bowed; she repeated my name and begged me to be seated. The interview was ordinary enough. During the time I sat there I tried with difficulty to realize that the tiny morsel of humanity before me was as important a personage as she really was. But figures proved her immense wealth and her power in the community. I was anxious for a sight of Kate Staniels; I imagined I had already seen Bessie. I searched the spare brown face, trying to discover some hope for these dependent girls; but Miss Gilbert, disdaining the back of a chair at sixty, seemed as far removed from physical enfeeblement as the Hebe Kate herself and as little in need of sympathy and aid as a bronze woman. The interview was for legal purposes, as I expected, and at last I took my leave—possibly a little elated by the patronage of such a client. As I drove slowly down the road, I met a gentleman on horseback—a handsome fellow, with a curly blonde beard, and with a pair of blue eyes keen as a Damascus blade. They met mine with a flash that I considered quite uncalled for, until I saw him enter the Gilbert gate, whence I had just emerged. He was Kate Staniels's lover. I snapped my fingers at the discovery. Though I might have been favored with brunette Kate's utmost graciousness, Rick Lawton need not have been jealous, for the little soft-voiced blonde girl was much more to my taste. The moment I met her lovely blue eyes, I was under the conviction that I would snap her up quickly enough if I had but the chance. Wondering what kind of a reception Rick Lawton would get from Miss Gilbert, I drove on. It was a bright April day, the thin shadows of the half-leaved elms flickering in the grass, and the roads heavy with a late spring rains. Suddenly my horses pricked up their ears. An unusual object attracted their attention. It was a heavy coach minus a wheel, deeply sunk in the mud—a break-down of the mail and passenger stage from the railroad station. I came up and drew rein. It was the trip from the early train, and there was only one passenger. The driver was getting the horses out of their harness. The passenger was standing on the steps of the coach and looking about in the gloomiest distress. He was a weak-eyed young man, delicately attired, with a dressing case in his hand, and hair so strongly red that it seemed to have drawn all energy and vigor from the rest of his body. He looked helplessly from the driver to the mud, and from the mud to the sky, as if he had sent for a chariot from the heavens—perhaps Apollo's—and momentarily expected his arrival. "Can I do anything for you, Jem?" I asked the man who was unharnessing the horses. "No, thank you, Mr. Ronaldson. The mail's to go up, and I can take that up

on my leader. I've a passenger, and I s'pose he can ride on another of the horses, seen' the mud's so deep. Can't you, sir?" with an amusing glance of doubt at the gingerly figure on the coach steps. "Wide won of those animals! No, I couldn't do it, possibly. I've paid my fare, driver. You must manage some way to get me to town." This, in a languid voice, from the young with red hair. "We're in town now," answered honest Jem, a little roughly. "You're wantin' to go half a mile to Miss Gilbert's house. Well, there's no way now, but to ride one of these horses, or to wait until I can go to the hotel and get a hack for yer." "How long must I wait, fellah?" "An hour or so. I've got to get the mail up to the office in time." And, jumping on his horse, bare back, Jem seemed about to leave his passenger to his fate. "If you like to take a seat with me, I will take you to Miss Gilbert's," I said, addressing the young man, whose pallid face was growing as red as his hair at Jem's unceremonious treatment. "Thank ye, thank ye!" he said eagerly; and then, seeing the oozing wheel-ruts—a pile of destruction to his polished boots—he gave me a glance of such pathetic appeal that I instantly turned the buggy within reach of the steps, and in a moment received the red hair, weak eyes, ill-nic pantaloons, and dressing case in close companionship. "Howvid wude these stage d'wivers are!" he exclaimed, settling himself comfortably beside me. "I have just come from Miss Gilbert's," I said, as I turned my horses' head. "Aw, you don't say so! Well, how is she now? Do you know, I never seen her!" "Indeed!" "Pon my honaw, never set my eyes on her." "Miss Gilbert is well, I believe." "Natural, now, my asking first thing if she's well. Ha, ha! You see I'm her heir." "Indeed!" "She don't know it though; don't know I'm living. I'm her brother's son. The old gent died down in Alabama a few years ago. All the brother the old lady ever had. Of course I come in for the property." "I have understood that Miss Gilbert had a sister." "Only a half sister. Married and had some children; but they are only number two. I'm her only brother's son, you see." "I can't see that you are unmistakably the heir." "Can't ye, now?" with a look of bewilderment. "Oh, well, I am!" after a moment, brightening up; and, evidently in the most serene frame of mind I put him down at Miss Gilbert's gate. If I was anxious to know how Rick Lawton would be received, I wondered yet more how this newly-discovered relative would be welcomed by the little brown woman. But I had no opportunity for observation for a day or two. Then, to my surprise, I received an invitation to a party at the Gilbert mansion. It was singular, all the gossips said so; but who could account for Miss Gilbert's whims? People looked curiously at the lights streaming from the old mansion, as they passed the house that night. A dignified servant ushered me into the drawing-room. It was filled with people. Miss Gilbert performed her duties with precision. "Have you met my niece, Mr. Ronaldson?" she asked, quite unnecessarily. I said no; but should be very happy to do so. She led me across the room, and presented me to queenly Kate. That gracious young beauty gave me a rose from her bouquet, and presented me to Bessie. Bessie was looking a little pale I thought. "The dancers are forming a set in the other room; will you honor me?" I said. She declined to dance, and I saw that she was trembling. "You are fatigued. Pray be seated," I said, bringing her a chair. She sank down wearily.

"Aw! how are you, Ronaldson? This is an unusual proceeding in this ghostly old house, they say," drawled a voice in my ear. I turned and encountered my red headed friend of the stage coach, stunningly gotten up in a white waistcoat and salmon-colored pantaloons. He put his glass to one of his weak eyes, and stared about the room. "My cousin Kate's a beauty, now?— Don't you think so?" "Miss Staniels is very handsome," I assented. "Wouldn't be a bad match," he added. I was silent. "I wouldn't like to live in this old castle alone—and Kate's got life you see." I bowed. Dropping my glance upon Bessie Staniels's face, I thought she was going to faint. I bent down. "Are you ill? I am afraid you are. Pray let me take you to a seat nearer the window." She took my arm and crossed the room. A fiery glow burned upon her cheeks. She looked back over her shoulder, with her violet eyes vividly bright. I involuntarily followed her glance, and saw it fastened upon her sister Kate, who, languidly fanning herself, was yet listening, with a glowing face, to a man with heavy black beard and bushy ebony eyebrows, who was talking earnestly to her. I could see nothing strange in this; but the delicate girl at my side was actually panting with distress. Something troubles you. Can I be of any service to you? Pray command me," I said, looking into those beautiful eyes, heavy with pain. "You? What can you do? Nothing. Never mind. And yet," she added, incoherently, "if you would—if you only would attract my aunt's attention from my sister just now! You see," she said, earnestly, "my aunt does not like that gentleman Kate is talking to. Indeed"—the tears filling her eyes—"she would turn us both out of doors this moment if she knew. He knows and yet he has come again. He and Kate will dare everything for the sake of meeting." "Is that man with the black beard Rick Lawton?" I said bewildered. "Yes, he is disguised, but I should think any one would know him. Aunt Agatha would if she only happened to notice. Every one in town knows about Kate and Rick. He was here yesterday, and aunt ordered him out of the house. And when he had gone she told Kate and me that—that she would turn us bareheaded into the street if he ever entered these doors again! Oh, look, Mr. Ronaldson, do you think she knows him?" Miss Gilbert was slowly approaching the couple. I thought she had a suspicion of the truth, and stepped into the arena. "Miss Gilbert, this is a very fine old house of yours. Is there any truth in the report that it is haunted?" Miss Gilbert's eyes flashed. "Haunted! Where did you hear such nonsense as that Mr. Ronaldson?" "Why, I have heard repeatedly that an old mansion of the town has a well-located family ghost, and I have always supposed that this was the one." "This is not the one. No such report was ever attached to my house. I should consider such a reputation an unparadonably injury, Mr. Ronaldson. Peter give me your arm to the dining-room." Miss Gilbert's red-haired young relative hastened to obey. I took Bessie; the rest swept after, with the exception of Kate and Lawton, who lingered under the chandelier, evidently oblivious to supper, or aught else but themselves and each other. The crowd filled the old fashioned dining-hall. The gentlemen found seats for the ladies, and circulated among them with oysters and cream. I brought Bessie a cup of coffee and urged her to take a glass of wine, yet she still looked excessively weary and ill at ease. "Don't be worried," I whispered.— "He will be gone before we go up stairs again, and there is Miss Gilbert enjoying her salad, yonder, with no thought for the lovers, I am certain." "Perhaps we have escaped this time;

but, ah, Mr. Ronaldson, if I could tell any one of half what I suffer! Oh, don't listen to me. I am crazy to talk like this to a stranger." "But I am not a stranger, I am very much your friend; and more, I have become your family solicitor, so that family secrets will be sure to get into my possession. Pray tell me what harasses you so, and very likely I can be of some use." "You are very good. I have told you, partly. It was bad enough before that Peter came, but now it is dreadful! Aunt has taken a fancy to him. He assumes to be the heir, and she does not contradict him. Whether it is for the purpose of hanging a terror over our heads, or not, I do not know. He is familiar, disagreeable, arrogant presumptuous. It is torture to live in the house with him. Kate does not mind it as I do; she is dreaming all the time of Rick. My heart sinks every time they meet, for I suspect they will plan an elopement. Aunt Agatha's fury will then descend on my head; or, if I go with them, I shall be dependent on Rick, and he is poor. I never learned to work. Oh, Mr. Ronaldson, it's a life of constant apprehension." Just at that moment there was a terrible cry, and Peter Gilbert's salmon-colored pantaloons leaped in at the window. "Miss Gilbert," he shouted, "I saw a man in the garden take off his head!" "Don't be a fool, Peter!" cried Miss Gilbert, forgetting politeness. "I did—I swear I did. It's so, it's so!" shouted the young man, greatly excited. "There was a tall man standing right in the path. I was looking at him when he took off his hat, and then took off his head!" "Where did he go?" asked some one. "Do you suppose I stayed to see? I was not such a fool as to keep such company as that." "Peter Gilbert!" cried Miss Gilbert, approaching him, and gesticulating forcibly, "how dare you raise such an infamous tale about my house? How dare you set such a disgraceful rumor afloat among all these people?" "It was so! I'll give my right hand if it wasn't," said Peter, doggedly. The process of eating was entirely suspended. Consternation settled upon the company. Miss Gilbert's eyes glittered like two sparks as she heard the whispers. "There never was such nonsense given rise to before. There never was a whisper of such folly connected with this place. I will have the garden searched. Bessie, Kate, call the servants." Just after Peter's outcry, Kate Staniels had entered the room, and stood for a moment quietly behind me. Then she suddenly disappeared. Miss Gilbert sent two men into the garden. "Of course they will find nothing," whispered the guests, with very pale cheeks. We stood about the doors and windows, when there was a scream of terror from the shrubbery, and Pompey came running towards the house. "Oh, Miss Gilbert, I swear to de Lord dat dere's a white figger a-walking down by the summer-house." "Fool! Fool! You're a fool too.— You senseless wretch!" cried Miss Gilbert. "Peter Gilbert, go out of my house! You have disgraced it, and ruined my servants. There never was talk of ghosts and spectres until you came here. Leave my house this minute and without a word!" Interference and remonstrance were useless. She set her face against listening to any one, and when Peter literally took his departure from the assembled company, the irascible old lady surprised every one by sitting down on the stairs and crying like a baby. "She had hoped to have a son in that fellow, and now he had brought disgrace upon her. She was all alone in the world, and would die as she had lived, unprotected against calumny!" "Oh, Aunt Agatha!" said little Bessie, affected to tears to see her sharp old aunt crying. "you are not alone, I love you—indeed I do! and so does Kate—and no one will believe that the house is haunted, I know." "Where is Kate?" cried the aston-