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Select Poetry.

FACTS AND FANCIES.

"Suppose," said he, in accents soft,
"A fellow, just like me,
Should axle a little girl to wed—
What would the answer be?"

The maiden drops her liquid eyes—
Her smiles with blushes mingle—
"Why seek the bride halter when
You may live on, Sur, cingle?"

And then he spoke—"Oh, be my bride,
I ask you once again;
You are the empress of my soul,
And there shall ever reign.

I'll never tire of kindly deeds
To win your gentle heart,
And saddle by the shaft that rends
Our happy lives apart!"

Upon her cheek the maiden felt
The mantling blushes glow—
She took him for her faithful hub—
To share her wheel or whoa.

STOLEN FROM THE GRAVE,

—OR—

The Doctor's Wife.

CONTINUED.

THE smile had faded from her face, and the tears had rushed into her eyes; but she replied with a faltering "yes."

"And you won't cry for me?" continued the doctor, kindly.

"No," said the child, lifting here eyelids with that peculiar motion of one who does not wish her tears to fall.

"I will come soon again," he said, smiling encouragingly. "And in the mean time if you should want anything, don't be afraid to ask Charlie for it."

Giving particular directions to the young nurse regarding his patient, and taking a tender leave of both, Doctor Thayer went into the house, bidding Charles bolt the office door on the inside after him, and let no one else enter.

"What self-control and fortitude the little thing has!" he thought, as he walked slowly through the corridor into the house, and instantly started, and breathlessly checked a thought which he would not for the world indulged.—But surely it would have been no crime if Doctor Thayer had wished that all grown people had as much self-control and fortitude as were possessed by that little girl whom he had just rescued from the grave.

The morning came, and with it certainty as to the mother's fate. Before that her fever had been slight, with intervals of ease, and only a white fur on the tongue. But when the doctor went in at daylight, he saw no change. There was a haggardness about the face that had not been there before, the pulse had grown harder, the lips were dark and cracked, and the tongue, shrunken, dry, and almost black, lay like a strip of corrugated leather in her mouth.—The truth could no longer be doubted nor concealed. Mrs. Wilson had not many more days to live.

We pass over these sorrowful days.—They were bitter to all, perhaps least so to the dying woman herself. Meeta was prepared for the blow, and bore it as might have been expected, and Anne Thayer, when at length there was no more hope, called up her strength, and relieved her husband and sister of their fear of seeing her utterly prostrated.—Perhaps poor Charlie was the one most overcome, though he tried to bear up nobly. He maintained a sort of composure before the others, and when he found his strength failing, would go off

to Meeta's chamber, where Rose was secreted and flinging himself down by chair or sofa, would hide his face in her lap, and sob without control. He had no pride with her, for she never suspected that it was unmanly for him to shed tears, but only put her arms around him, and wept also, or tried to coax him back to cheerfulness.

The funeral over, and one day given to silence, the question came up as to what was to be done with Rose Paulier. For them to keep her was out of the question. It was equally out of the question to send her back to the poorhouse, even if any story could be invented to account for her sudden re-appearance after burial. All the family agreed that the child must be placed where she would be better cared for in future. Charles pleaded that she might be kept with them, and persisted that she could be secreted for a while, then sent away to school till she could be presented without fear of recognition; but of course this romantic plan was vetoed. All the while the matter had been plain in the doctor's mind, and after waiting diplomatically till one project after another had been proposed and proved impracticable, he propounded his own solution of the difficulty, and after some argument, carried the day.

The next morning after the decision was made, Doctor Thayer made a call on Mrs. Barbara Burkhardt. He would rather have been excused from doing it, but it was a part of his plan, and he was not a man to shrink for trifles. His relations with the Hall family were rather ceremonious, and he understood perfectly that Mrs. Burkhardt was not one who could easily forgive him for not marrying to please her, and for not submitting to be patronized by her. Like almost everybody else, he liked Mr. Burkhardt, and he tolerated Master Clarence's visits to Charles Wilson.—But for this unpleasant feeling toward the lady of the house, it would have been a delight to go there on that radiant June morning.

"Madam, or somebody, has good taste," muttered the doctor, as he paused on the upper terrace to glance about the grounds, and downward toward the road that bounded the estate, and was hidden by the billowy tree tops.

"Good-morning, doctor," said a voice at his elbow. And turning quickly, he confronted Mrs. Burkhardt, who immediately extended her hand and gave him a smiling welcome.

"I was sorry to learn of your trouble," she said. "I hope that the family are all well."

Mrs. Burkhardt knew perfectly well how to be agreeable, and was too well-bred to show any sign of the surprise she felt at this unexpected visit. Evidently nothing but business would bring Doctor Thayer to the Hall at this time, or any time, save on the most ceremonious occasions. The two walked slowly toward the house, pausing now and then to comment on a view, a flower, or the weather.

The lady was by no means a blot on the landscape, but rather added the finishing touch to it. Her large, fine form and handsome face, the trailing folds of her rose-colored morning-dress, the white lace scarf over her hair, and the little parasol she carried, made a very elegant picture. They went up the wide steps, madam stopping at the top to point out with her hand a glimpse of the distant ocean that glistened through the trees, then through the open door into a lofty hall that was lighted from the roof, and paved with a mosaic of native woods, set in an elaborate pattern. The stairway was in the rear of this hall, and was also of mosaic, the balusters richly carved of oak.

"I want to show you a pair of cabinet pictures we got in London," Mrs. Burkhardt said, leading the way into a pleasant morning-room at the right of the hall. "They were painted by a young German artist who was quite unknown, and was dying of consumption; but they are exquisite. C. says that the poor fellow would be famous if he could live."

"I should be happy to look at them," the doctor said, anxious to put a stop to the lady's courtesies; "but I came on an errand, and have but a few moments to spare."

"Oh, indeed!" says madam, seating herself immediately, and waiting with

folded hands for her visitor to state his business.

"I am sorry that I am not able to explain fully the reasons for my coming to you on such an errand," the gentleman began quietly, admiring the entire and immediate transition which his hostess' manner had undergone from that of a charming entertainer to the business woman; "and still more annoyed that in so trifling a matter I am obliged to express myself with a somewhat melodramatic degree of mystery and reserve. I have to ask you to trust to me that I would gladly avoid so absurd a degree of diplomacy if I could."

The gentleman smiled a slightly mocking but very pleasant smile, and the lady bowed without smiling.

"You remember the nurse, Mrs. Paulier, who died here at your house two or three years ago, and her little girl in the poorhouse?" he went on.

Mrs. Burkhardt bowed again, and without opening her lips, which were pressed closely together, and somewhat pale.

"He knows how she died!" was the thought that flashed through her mind.

"You have also heard, doubtless that the child died a week or two ago of the fever?"

This time there was no sign of response, but the lady's brows were slightly drawn in a frowning shadow. Why didn't the man go on and tell his business? He was trying to torment her, she thought.

"I have heard from some one, possibly from yourself," the doctor continued, "that the mother left some little souvenirs which you are keeping till the child shall be old enough and in a station to be intrusted with them. Of course, you would naturally suppose now that there is no one to claim these articles; but I have come across a person who has as much right to them as the child would have if she were living. I am not at liberty to explain; but you will believe that I must be satisfied in my own mind as to the rights of the person to whom I refer. If the matter is satisfactory to you, perhaps you'd like to send these little souvenirs to their owner by me."

Doctor Thayer, though perfectly aware that his errand was, as he said, surrounded by an absurd degree of mystery for so small a matter, was nevertheless astonished at the emotion which Mrs. Burkhardt showed. She became perfectly white while he spoke, and when she answered, entirely forgot her usual ease and courtesy.

"This is very singular!" she exclaimed, fixing her flashing eyes on him. "I do not understand why the affair should be concealed from me, or why I should be required to give up these articles without knowing to whom they are to go."

Doctor Thayer looked at her in astonishment, and haughtily rose to his feet.

"I was not aware that I was making an insulting request," he said, coldly.—"I do not know what the articles referred to are, or whether they are of any value save to the owner. My impression was that you would wish to give them to any person having a right to receive them, and that their chief, perhaps only, value lay in the fact that they would be souvenirs of the dead to a near friend who is living. I have no personal interest in the matter, of course, and I beg your pardon for mentioning the subject. The owner will at some time call on you, but I shall not urge the matter any further. I wish you a very good-morning!"

Having finished his speech, the gentleman bowed lowly, and turned away with a very high head.

"Stop, doctor," the lady exclaimed, rising. "Of course I have no right to keep these trifles, and no wish to. I am merely annoyed that when I took care of the woman in her last moments, and have felt an interest in the child ever since, there should be so little confidence shown me in the matter. I prefer that you should take the articles if you are satisfied as to the claim of the person who demands them. Indeed, they belong as much to you as to me, and I am glad to get them off my hands."

"Pardon me?" said the doctor, stiffly. "I must decline taking them under the circumstances. I regarded the matter

as a trifling to you and to me, and only of consequence to a near friend of the lady who is dead. I am astonished that it is sufficient to cause you any emotion and I repeat that I shall on no account take the articles in question, but shall leave the lady's friend to call for them at such time as may be thought best."

"Doctor, I insist on your hearing me," Mrs. Burkhardt said, in a tone more entreating than peremptory. "You have no right to state an errand so oddly, and then leave me in this abrupt manner because I am surprised and annoyed. I request you to do me the favor to resume your seat."

It was impossible for a gentleman to refuse. Doctor Thayer returned to his seat, and waited for the lady to speak.

"You know some reason why this subject should agitate me!" she said, abruptly, fixing her piercing eyes on him with a look which she tried to make defiant, but which quailed in spite of her.

"I do not know of any reason why you should be offended at my request," he replied, evasively, determined if possible to solve the mystery which he perceived existed. Rose had no friend but him, and if this lady was seeking to wrong her in any way, it was his duty to shield the child.

"He knows about the poison," the lady thought. "Perhaps I did wrong," she said, aloud, assuming a grieved and deferential air; "but I am not acquainted with the law in such cases, and having once arranged to conceal the matter of the poor creature's death, it was impossible to change my course afterward. I have been sorry ever since; and yet what could I do?" Looking at him appealingly.

"What was the cause of Mrs. Paulier's death?" asked Doctor Thayer, looking steadily in the lady's face.

"You do not know?" she said, in a trembling voice.

"I do not know," the doctor replied, decidedly.

Mrs. Burkhardt dropped her eyes, and the blood rushed over her white face.—She perceived that she had made a capital blunder.

"I should not have mentioned it to you had I not thought that you knew something about it," she resumed presently, in a suppressed voice, which gradually cleared, and grew more assured as she went on. "But I am not sure that I would not rather you should know it. I tell you in confidence!"—Looking at him inquiringly.

"I shall not betray your confidence, unless my sense or honor would oblige me to," he replied. "You have thus far told me nothing. Perhaps you had better not tell me. If the affair is of any importance, I ought not to make any promise in the dark, particularly as I am committed to Mrs. Paulier's friends. If she came to her death fairly, then I ask no further explanation."

"The apothecary made a mistake in the prescription," she said hastily, in a whisper.

"Ah!"

"It was Mr. Somes, you knew him, and it almost killed the poor man. Indeed, I do not doubt that it caused his death. Doctor Marston had ordered morphia and I don't know what horrid thing the apothecary put up. She died in a few hours. Of course we were terribly shocked and frightened, and our first impulse was to say to the servants and visitors that Mrs. Paulier had been taken violently ill, and to avoid all the talk and gossip we could. Then, on second thought, it seemed as well to conceal the whole matter, since Mr. Somes was in such distress, and promised to give up business immediately, and never to put up another prescription; and since really no one could be benefited by a complaint. If any friend of Mrs. Paulier's had appeared, I should have told the whole, and let matters take their course. In such a case, the business would have been taken quite out of my hands. But under the circumstances, and since the only end to be attained was revenge on that poor apothecary, who would do no more damage to any one, and since I dreaded the publicity of the affair, why, I concluded to keep it among ourselves."

Ending, Mrs. Burkhardt sank back in her chair, folded her hands, and looked at the doctor for his opinion. By this time there was a spot of bright red

burning in each of her cheeks, and the folded hands were folded very tightly.

"You forgot one end which should have been considered an important one," Doctor Thayer said, with cold severity; "and that is the poor, helpless child who by her mother's death was left not only an orphan, but utterly without friends and support. So far as I have heard, Mrs. Paulier was a lady, and had always had a good home for her child, quite a different home from the one to which the little girl was sent. If nothing else had been accomplished by an investigation, Mr. Somes who was well off, might have been made to pay for the support and education of the child whom his criminal carelessness had deprived of her natural support and protector."

"I do not know the law in such cases made and provided," the lady said, in a slightly sneering tone, yet with an evident desire to conciliate. "Sending the child where I did, was not like sending her to the poorhouse. I put her under the care of Mrs. Warren, a most capable and excellent person, and meant to take her into my employment as soon as she should be old enough and fitted to sew, or be in any way useful. To keep her here was out of the question. I did not wish to bring her up in the house as a servant, nor would I have her as one of the family."

"After this explanation, I have no longer any feeling of delicacy about receiving the articles of which I came here to speak," the doctor said, coldly. "Shall I take them now, or will you send them to me?"

"I will send them to you," the lady replied.

A formal leave-taking, and the two parted, both sufficiently disturbed.

That evening, when the family at the cottage were gathered in the parlor after tea, there was a sound of horses prancing down their street, and presently Mrs. Burkhardt's carriage drew up at the gate and Mrs. Burkhardt herself descended. She had dressed entirely in black, and, having an errand to do, had anticipated a little, and made her visit of condolence rather sooner than she otherwise would.

"But those who have so long known each other may dispense with a little ceremony," she said, with mournful saavity, after having kissed both Meeta and Mrs. Thayer, and clasped the hands of the doctor and Charles. "And I think in the first days of our trouble, when we can't go out, we stand all the more in need of company, to distract our attention."

She was all grace and sweetness, was sympathizing, yet did not talk in that horrible skull-and-cross-bones style which some persons feel obliged to adopt when making a visit of condolence. She prettily alluded to the fact that Anne had some one whose privilege it was to console her, and regretted that her congratulations to the bride must be made under the shadow of affliction. Just before going she drew from her reticule a tiny prayer-book bound in ivory and gold, and presented it to Mrs. Thayer.

"My wedding present comes rather late," she said, "but it is not, I hope, too late."

The bride received the beautiful gift, and made her acknowledgment for it.

"Come up and see Clarence," the lady said to Charles. "He is longing to tell all his friends about his first European journey. To be sure it was only three months in England, but it was across the ocean, and he feels quite traveled."

She took an affectionate leave of the sisters, begging them to come soon to see her.

"You need not see other company unless you like," she said. "Tell the servant, if we have any one with us whom you don't wish to see, to show you into my private sitting-room, or to Cousin Margaret's room. She would be delighted to see you. And apropos of Cousin Margaret, doctor, will you be good enough to come up and see her in the morning? She is a great sufferer, and I really feel as though something might be done to relieve her. I wish that you would undertake her case."

Doctor Thayer offered his arm, and waited on Mrs. Burkhardt to the carriage. After she had taken her seat and nodded to the ladies who stood on the