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Select Poetry.

FAINT HEART.

She stood before him, tall and fair
And gracious, on that summer's day,
With June's first roses in her hair,
And on her cheek the bloom of May.
But rosy cheek, and dimpled chin,
And raven lashes drooping low,
Conceal the answer he would win:
It might be Yes; would it be No?

Ah, if 't were No—his throbbing heart
Stood fairly still with sudden pain;
And if 't were Yes, the world so wide
His deep content could scarce contain.
So wondrous fair! how could she stoop
To favor such a one as he?
Ah, sweet suspense that still leaves hope!
Ah, pain of sad uncertainty!

He held her hand so white and small,
And moved to press it with his lips,
But changed his mind, and let it fall,
With chilliest touch of finger tips,
And took the seat she offered him
Upon the sofa by her side,
Nor made the space between them less,
Which seemed so narrow, yet so wide.

Then gazing on the perfect face,
The dimpled mouth, the serious eyes,
And drinking in with eager ears
The music of her low replies,
He let the bright hours drift away,
Nor told the secret of his heart,
But when the shadows lengthened lay,
Rose, all reluctant to depart,

And stammered forth with blushing cheek,
An eager, timorous request
That she, for old acquaintance sake,
Would grant the roseth from her breast.
She gave it him, with downcast eyes,
And watched him leave her, with a sigh,
"So good," she said, "so true, so wise;
Ah me, if he were not so shy!"

A TERRIBLE RIDE.

I HAD spent a night in a stage, a day in a saddle, a night in a sleeping car, half a day doing business, half a day in bed, and was, after supper, enjoying a cigar and a newspaper, in the reading-room of the Redwood House, Fayette, Indiana. The newspaper was uninteresting, or else I was rather sleepy—and I guess it was a little of both—so that I soon neglected it, to watch the fantastic curling of the smoke from my fine-flavored cigar. I didn't feel much like talking, and still less like reading; but I did feel as if I would like exceedingly well to hear a good story.

I had barely come to this conclusion, and commenced wishing for some one of my acquaintances to amuse me till the time was up for the train which was to take me to Indianapolis, when I recognized, in the person who sat next to me, a fellow-traveler in the sleeping-car of the night before.

He, too, had laid aside his paper, and was apparently, like me, watching the smoke of his cigar, and wishing for absent friends to keep him company.

He was a very agreeable-looking little man, with a clear, gray eye, light hair, sandy whiskers, and smiling mouth.—Indeed, he had so much the appearance of the man that I would like to hear tell a story, that I thought Dame Fortune had smiled upon me, when he recognized me with a genial, "How d'y'e do, stranger?"

I returned his salutation, and asked him some common-place questions about how he had enjoyed the ride we had together.

He said something in reply about the running being too fast for the poor track, and from this the conversation ran upon fast travelling in general, for some time. At last I remarked, that

sixty miles an hour was the most speedy traveling that I had ever done. Whereupon my friend informed me, with a pleasant but knowing smile, that he had traveled considerably faster than that, and, in fact, faster than he had ever heard of, besides.

Of course I was anxious to know where, how, and when he had done it; and, after the modest assurance that he feared his tale would not be interesting, my friend relieved my anxiety by relating the following story:

"I am a railroad engineer. Away along in fifty-seven, during the great panic, I was running on the F. & C. R. R. The railroad companies were going under, in all directions. Every day we heard of new failures; and quite often in a quarter where we least expected it.—Our road was generally looked upon as one of the most substantial in the nation; nobody seemed to have any fears that it would fail to survive the general mash-up. But yet I did not fully share in the general confidence. Wages were cut down; arrears collected; and a great many other little matters seemed to indicate to me that the road had got into rather deeper water than was agreeable all around.

"Among other things, the master mechanic had told me in the spring that the company had ordered four first quality Taunton engines for the fall passenger business. The road was put in the very best condition, and other preparations were made to cut down the time, and put the trains through quicker than was ever known before, when the new engines should come. Well, there was but one of the engines came.

"I said there was but one engine came; but she was, in my opinion, altogether the best ever turned out of the Taunton Works; and that is saying as much as can be said in praise of any engine. She was put in my charge immediately, with the understanding that she was mine.

"It was Saturday when she came out of the shop, and I was to take a special train up to Y—. The train was to carry up the president and several of the officers of the road, to meet some officers of another road, which crossed ours there, and arrange some important business with them.

"I had no trouble at all in making my sixty miles an hour going out. The engine handled herself most beautifully. We were just holding up at Y—, when Aldrich, the treasurer, who had come out on the platform to put the brake on, slipped and fell. As we were yet under good headway, he was very much injured, and was carried off to the hotel insensible.

"According to the president's directions, I switched off my train, turned my engine, and stood ready to start back to C— at a moment's notice.

"Aldrich's presence was of so much importance that the business could not be transacted without him; so all those I had brought out, except the president and Aldrich, went back to C— on the three o'clock express train. This was the last regular train which was to pass over the road until the next Monday.

"Early in the evening I left the machine in charge of my fireman, and went over to an eating-house, to see if I could not spend the time more pleasantly than on my engine. The hours dragged themselves away slowly. I was playing a game of dominoes with the station agent, when I came Roberts, the president, in a state of great excitement.

"Harry," said he to me, "I want you to put me down in C— at twelve o'clock."

"As it was nearly eleven o'clock then, and the distance was seventy-five miles, I thought he was joking at first; but when we got outside the door, he caught me by the arm, and hurried me along so fast that I saw he was in earnest.

"Harry," said he, "if you don't set me down in C— by twelve o'clock, I'm a ruined man, and this road is a ruined road. Aldrich is dead; but he told me, before he died, that he had embezzled from time to time, five hundred thousand of our money; and his clerk is to start with it, on the twelve o'clock train for Canada. If we don't have the money on Monday morning, to make some payments with, the road goes into other hands; and if you put me in C—

at the right time, so that I save the money, you shall have five thousand dollars. Understand it, Harry? Five thousand dollars."

"Of course I understood it. I saw now the reason why the wages had been cut down; I understood it all, and my blood boiled. I felt that I would save the road if I lived, and told Mr. Roberts so.

"See that you do it, Harry," he replied, as he climbed upon the step of the coach which was coupled to my engine.

"I sprang up into the foot-board of my engine, got up the switch-tender to help my fireman, opened the throttle, and just as she commenced moving, looked at my watch—it was just eleven o'clock, so that I had one hour to make my seventy-five miles in.

"From T— to C— there were few curves on the road; but there were several heavy grades. I was perfectly acquainted with every rod of it; so that I knew exactly what I had to encounter; and when I saw how the engine moved, I felt very little fear for the result.

"The road, for the first miles, was an air-line, and so smooth that my engine flew along with scarcely a perceptible jar. I was so busy, posting myself up, as to the amount of wood and water aboard, etc., that we dined by the first station before I was aware of it, having been five minutes out, and having five miles accomplished.

"You are losing time!" yelled a voice from the coach. I looked around, and there stood Roberts with his watch in his hand.

"I knew very well, that we would have to increase our speed by some means, if we carried out our plans of reaching C— by midnight, and looked around, to see what I could do to accomplish that purpose. She was blowing off steam fiercely at one hundred and ten pounds; so I turned down the valve to hundred and ten pounds, for I knew we would need it all to make some of the heavy grades which lay between us and C—.

"It was three miles to the next station. With the exception of a few curves, the track was as good as the last. As we darted around what commonly seemed to be a rather long curve, at the station, but which was, at our high speed, short enough, I looked at my watch; and we had done it in two minutes and a half.

"Gaining," I shouted back to Roberts, who was yet standing on the platform of the coach.

"Look out for the heavy grades," he replied, and went inside the car.

"The next six miles rose gradually from a level the first, to ten and a half feet grade the last, which lay between us and the next station. My fireman kept her full; and now she began to get hot. The furnace door was red, and the steam raised continually; so that she kept her speed, and passed the station, like a streak of light, in five minutes.

"Now came nine miles like the last; over which she kept pace with her time and passed the station in seven and a half minutes.

"Here, for ten miles, we had a twenty-foot grade to encounter, but the worst of it all was, at this place we would be obliged to stop for wood. I was just going to speak to Roberts about it, when I looked around and saw him filling the tender from the coach with wood which had been placed there before starting, while he was gone after me.

"I believe we would have made this ten miles with the same speed as before; but, through the carelessness of the firemen, the fountain-valve, on the left-hand side of the engine, got opened, and the water rose in the boiler so fast as to run the steam down to one hundred pounds, before I discovered where the difficulty lay.

"At first, Roberts didn't appear to notice the decrease of speed, and kept at work at the wood as if for dear life.—But, presently, he looked up; and, seeing that the speed had decreased, he shouted:

"Harry, we are stopping!" and then coming over to where I was, he said: "Why, here we have been ten minutes on the last ten miles, and I believe that we will come to a dead stand-still if something is not done. The speed is

continually slackening. What is the matter?"

"I explained the cause. He was apparently satisfied with my explanation, and, after having tied down the safety-valve, he climbed back over the tender, exhorting me to 'at her through, for God's sake, or we are all beggars together!'

"Just then we passed the next station, having taken nine minutes for eight miles. We were now more than half over the road; but we had lost nearly ten minutes' time, and had left only twenty-seven minutes to do thirty-four miles in.

"I had shut the water off from both my pumps, a little distance back, when I discovered what was the matter, and she was now making steam finely down a slight grade. From less than one hundred, with which we started over the ten-mile stretch, she had two hundred pounds before we finished it; and, as the gauge indicated no higher no higher than that, and the valve was tied down, I could not tell how much over two hundred pounds she carried, but she certainly carried none less the rest of the journey. And well might she carry such an enormous head of steam: for, after passing over that ten miles in eight minutes, there lay ten miles of five-foot up-grade, and fourteen miles of twenty-foot-to-the-mile depression between us and C—, and it was now eleven o'clock and forty-seven minutes.

"Now the engine was hot in earnest. The furnace door, smoke arch, and chimney, all were red; while she seemed to fly onward as if the very Evil One himself operated her machinery.

"Six minutes carried us over that ten miles; and we darted by the last station that had lain between us and C—. Now we had fourteen miles to go, and my time showed 11 o'clock and 53 minutes.

"If I live," said I to myself, 'I will make it.' And we plunged down that twenty-foot grade with all steam on.—Persons who saw the train on that wild run, said that it was so soon after they heard the first sound of her approach, when the strange object, which looked as if it was a flame of fire, darted by, and then the sound of its traveling died away in the distance, that they could hardly convince themselves they had really seen anything. It seemed more like the creature of a wild dream than a sober reality.

"And now let me tell you, that no engine ever beat the time we made on fourteen miles. Those great wheels, 7 feet in diameter, spun around so swift that you couldn't begin to count the revolutions. The engine barely seemed to touch the track as she flew along; and although the track was as true as it was possible for it to be, she swayed fearfully, and sometimes made such prodigious jolts that it required considerable skill for one to keep his feet.—No engine could hold together if crowded to a greater speed.

"Well, just as I came to a stand-still in the depot at C— the big clock boomed out twelve, and the steamboat was getting her steam on. Roberts got on board in time and nothing to spare."

"And he saved the money, did he?"

I asked, when I saw that my friend had finished his story.

"Yes; he found it hid away in some old boxes as Aldrich had directed him."

"If you are the passenger for G—," said a waiter, "the 'bus' is ready."

So I thanked my friend for his story, and bade him "good-by."

A Jurymen's Grievance.

"WELL, gentlemen, have you decided upon your verdict?" asked a Judge in San Francisco, the other day, as the jury returned to the box.

"Did I understand that the prisoner's name was Severance, T. K. Severance?" asked the foreman, gloomily.

"It is."

"Then we bring in a verdict of murder in the first degree," and the foreman rubbed his hands with an expression of horrible satisfaction.

"But this isn't a murder case," said the astonished Judge, "this is an action to recover insurance. What on earth do you mean?"

"Don't make any difference," growled the foreman. "My name is Sever-

ance, too—T. H. Severance—and for the last four years some unprincipled wretch of the same surname has had his washing done at the laundry I patronize.—The result is that every now and then I find some of my silk embroidered handkerchiefs and four dollar shirts gone and in place of them about the worst looking lot of old rags on record—things mixed, you see."

"Well, but"—

"I know what you are going to say, but that ain't the point. The other Severance, always takes back the things of his I return. Oh! yes; but he freezes on to my garments like a mud turtle to a worm."

"Notwithstanding which?"

"I wouldn't amind it so much, but the cold-blooded appropriator always keeps posted as to when I change my Chinaman, and the next week follows with his wash too. Why, I've been clear round to all the wash-houses in the city six times already—this fellow after me like a sleuth hound."

"Really, Mr. Foreman, this is all very well, but"—

"I even went so far, your honor, as to change my name—actually had all my underclothes marked Gungleburg—Julius G. G. Gungleberg—just think of it—but what did this wretch do but find it out, and change his'n, and before I knew it he had gathered in six more of my brand new shirts and a set of pajamas. It's no use recommending him to mercy. I've explained the whole thing to the jury, and they all agree he ought to be hanged before sunrise to-morrow, if the Sheriff can fix things on time," and there was a universal roar of indignation from sympathetic spectators as the Judge ordered a new trial, and put the foreman under heavy bonds to keep the peace.

Carried Her Point.

San Francisco has witnessed a scene which has created much fun, but more profanity in every post-office in the U. S. "A female argonaut of fearful vitality," we read in the San Francisco "Bulletin," "a tall and extremely ugly female called at the post-office, tendered ninety-nine coppers to the urbane clerk and asked in lieu thereof three cent stamps. The official remarked that he could only receive four coppers as a legal tender, and at the expense of a deal of precious time endeavored to convince the young lady that he was guided by certain rules, and had no latitude in the matter.

"She waned wroth, and remarked that when, in the course of human events, United States coin was to be refused by a United States official, she thought her forefathers had died in vain, and she considered it her duty to bring the government to account.

"Then she paced the corridor, of the post-office until she had made thirty-three separate tenders of the coppers and obtained thirty-three three-cent stamps. During her transactions with the clerk she gave him much unsolicited advice, and otherwise contributed to enjoyment of a little knot of spectators. The clerk acted the gentleman throughout."

Mark Train visited Niagara and was sadly troubled at the various signs he saw posted up. He says: "To tell the plain truth, the multitude of signs annoyed me. It was because I noticed at last that they always happened to prohibit exactly the very thing I was just wanting to do. I desired to roll on the grass; the signs prohibited it. I longed to smoke; the sign prohibited it. And I was just in the act of throwing a stone over to astonish and pulverize such parties as might be picnicing below, when a sign I have just mentioned forbade that. Even that satisfaction was denied me (and I a friendless orphan).—There was no resource: now but to seek consolation in the flowing bowl. I drew my flask from my pocket, but it was all in vain. A sign confronted me, and said:

"No drinking allowed on the premises."

"On that spot I might have perished of thirst but for the saving words of an honored maxim that flitted through my memory at that critical moment. "All signs fail in a dry time." Common law takes precedence of the statutes. I was saved.