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Maxham & Wing

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A GIRL'S A GIRL FOR A THAT.

Is there a lady in the land
That boasts her rank and a that?
With scornful eye, we pass her by;
And little care for a that!
For Nature's charms shall bear the palm—
A girl's a girl for a that.

What though her neck with jewels she deck;
With folly's gear and a that,
And gaily ride in pomp and pride;
We can dispense with a that.
An honest heart acts no such part—
A girl's a girl for a that.

The nobly born may proudly scorn
A lowly lass and a that;
A pretty face has far more grace
Than haughty looks and a that!
A bonnie mind needs no such aid—
A girl's a girl for a that.

Then let us trust that come it may;
When faith and love, all arts above,
Shall reign supreme and a that!
And every youth confess the truth—
A girl's a girl for a that.

GOING HOME.

A wet, dismal night—a night when, tempted by the first warm days of Spring, people who had left off fires looked dubiously at their polished grates, and shuddered as the faint beat heavily against the windows and the wind howled in the chimney—a night when not a star was visible, when the gas lights flickered and flattered in a misty, uncertain manner, and the pavement was covered with a greasy agglutination of sludge and mud—a night when sudden gusts took pedestrians almost off their feet, and sent the blinding drizzle into their faces till they could hardly see their way; when umbrellas were a myth, and waterproofs a fop delusion; and a light fog, strongly suggestive of sore throats and rheumatism, hung over the marshy districts of London.

Three o'clock in the morning, and on Waterloo Bridge—silence over the great city—the great dark hive that loomed so grimly against the leaden sky, while the busy brains of ever-restless men kept feverish watches through the still small hours.

Not a sound save the splash, a flash of the river, as it swept under the cold stone arches, sucking and licking the piers with its furtive, hungry tongues; the distant rumble of a market wagon, or a horse retreating cab; or the chiming of the city churches, telling how time was passing away.

And a woman, weary and foot-sore, with garments that hardly protected her from the rain, a shawl so thin and ragged that it required all the strength left in her long, lean arms to prevent its being blown away, offered a silver three-pence to the toll man at the gate.

A bright fire was blazing in the little room—cozy and warm it looked compared with the dreariness without; and the man, as he held his coat tight up in his neck to shield him from the piercing blast, looked askance at the wayfarer.

He was used to these tramps; they would sleep in the recesses of the bridge on the warm summer nights—any, and in the bitter winter, too; they swarmed on the water steps, where they lay huddled together, old and young, a loathsome, hideous mass. He had grown quite accustomed to the tide of human misery that crept so closely to the dark silent river. Did they think, these poor offcasts of humanity, that when life was fast ebbing even for them to bear there was rest beneath those cold, turbid waters, a home somewhere below their Stygian obscurity?

He was wont to see all phases of squalid wretchedness and vice, yet something in this woman's hurried manner, her evident desire to be unnoticed, added to the lateness of the hour, caused him to look closely at her before delivering her change. She didn't seem exactly like a pauper; there were signs of delicacy and better days in the white scarred face, whose outline he could scarcely catch through the dark, wavy hair, which was pushed in such disorder beneath the faded bonnet.

He was a kind-hearted man, one who had gone through suffering himself.

"It's a bad night for you to be out in, my girl; a terrible bad night."

The woman drew her shawl tighter round her shivering form.

"You needn't tell me that," she replied with a ghastly smile. "I know that as well as you."

"Take care you don't get blown off the bridge," returned the man, "there's wind enough to do it."

"There's no such luck," retorted she bitterly. "Death don't come to those who seek it."

"Well, it's a bad lookout when one wants to seek it. I suppose you are going home?"

This was a side hit.

The woman drew herself up.

"What's that to you?" she flared out.

"What business is it of yours where I am going? Can't you give me the money and let me go, and not keep me here in this villainous rain?"

"Well, you needn't be so sharp. Surely a fellow could ask a question without being snapped up like that. It ain't no matter to me where you goes."

"Then what did you ask for?" she retorted, impatiently, taking the coppers; then, as if she regretted her rudeness, she said more gently: "Yes, I am going home. It that will satisfy you—such a home as it is. Good-night, my old fellow."

The wind and the rain shut the door for him; the wind and the rain beat against the toll-house windows, like angry spirits clamor for entrance, and the wind and the rain sent the poor wanderer far on the bridge out of his sight.

He sat down again in his wooden arm chair beside the genial fire. He could not rest, however, but started nervously as the north wind howled louder around his little cabin, or a sound to which his fancy gave a hideous shape fell on his listening ear.

Twice he rose, and peered out through the misty panes of glass that constituted the toll-house windows as if he could see anything but the drops of rain that trickled in rivulets down the dim transparency, as if he could see anything but the murky darkness, the bitter, cruel night.

"I wish I'd flogged her," he muttered to himself; "I'm blast if I don't. It's queer to me if she ain't a run up; but, dash it, what is a fellow to do?"

He couldn't run after every tramp that chose to go over the bridge, he thought. With this reflection he endeavored to soothe the uneasy mind that would not allow him to be at peace.

And the woman or girl—for in spite of her squalor and misery she looked youthful, even now—saw swiftly on till she reached the middle of the bridge. There was no one to stay her; the recesses were all deserted; she was there in the darkness, the silence and the rain, as lonely as though she were in an eastern desert. Alone in the very heart of London, midway between those two great masses of habitations that stretch on either side of the wonderful, regal river. To her left, amidst the gaunt, tall houses, whose reflection made the waters blacker still, towered St. Paul's Cathedral, England's heroes' mausoleum; while far above, far past the graceful bridges, with

their avenues of twinkling lights, lay the old Abbey, in the solemn shadow of its sanctuary, like a voice from the past, with the hollows of ages around it. There were lights in many a window yet, telling of those for whom there is no night—the sick, the dying and oppressed—telling of those to whom night brings no repose, no significance, but a season for harder work flched from the over-excited brain.

The silence was all exterior. She knew well, vagrant as she was, that there are hundreds of dwellings in which night was the real day, during which men work and toil and fight, conquer and fail, in the great battle of life. She knew, God alone knows how bitterly, that Hell held high carnival during these midnight hours, and that while the innocent and good slept the calm sleep of the just, devils incarnate laughed over the ruin of immortal souls.

But all this was nothing new to her. There was no hand, devil's or angel's stretched forth to help her in her fearful need. She stood for a moment on the parapet, her hands—those thin, attenuated hands—clenched tightly together.

There might be a better world she thought; there couldn't be a worse. The God who made her could forgive her if she were doing wrong. And a wild scream mingled with the sobbing wind, as the cold waters parted for a moment, and then went rippling on, over a broken heart.

A policeman heard the scream as he stood at the other end of the bridge, vainly endeavoring to shield himself from the storm. He turned his bull's eye on, and looked up and down the road. Some poor "unfortunate," he thought, engaged in a drunken brawl. Best to let her fight it out herself; he would get no good by interference.

A large man heard that scream as he lay dozing in his barge. It seemed to sound close to his ear.

And the angels of God heard that scream as they hovered over the sin-stained city; and they bled it upward on their snowy wings through unimpeachable space, through the golden floods of light that fit beyond all human thought, irradiate the confines of eternal bliss, till it woke the echoes of unutterable love at the mercy gate of heaven.

A fortnight later, and another night in London—a soft, balmy, spring night, when myriads of glittering stars lighted the heavens with their beauty, and shone down upon the sleeping earth like the eye of an ever-watchful Providence—a night when hundreds of pedestrians thronged the brilliant streets, when carriages full of lovely women rolled along the causeways, and through the squares, and flaunted their paint and feathers in the finest thoroughfares of virtuous London—a night when the clubs at the West-End were all illuminated and handsome dissolute men stood on the steps, or at the open windows, discussing the latest new opera, or the characters of their female friends—when in the alleys and corners of the old metropolis small thieves, with children's bodies, and old cunning faces, plied their unlawful trade, and from out meretricious splendor of the gin palaces that, like enchanted mansions in the Arabian Nights seemed doubly dazzling amid the dinginess around, rose discordant voices, while hellish laughter mingled with the pure still air.

There were lights in one of the large houses in Belgrave-square; a carriage and two stood before the door, and in one of the splendidly-furnished drawing rooms within sat a young girl, dressed for a ball, fastening the buttons of her tiny gloves. She was very fair—fair with the pale, Saxon beauty so distinctive of our race; delicate, aristocratic face, large, dreamy, pensive eyes, and lustrous, wavy hair falling over the white, shimmering silken robes like golden sunshine on the snow-clad Alps.

"Beautiful exceedingly," she seemed to say, and so the fine, tall man thought—her brother evidently, by the likeness between them—as he entered the room, and stood for a moment gazing at her.

He smiled approvingly as, taking up her fan and bouquet, she advanced to meet him; and then a shadow of something like anxiety fell over his face. It was gone however in an instant.

"I am afraid we shall be late, Constance; it is nearly twelve now," and Lady Churchill begged us to come early.

"I am ready, William," she replied; "but there's plenty of time. We shall be weary enough before it is over." And she shrugged her shoulders with a charming gesture of indifference.

"No revel is complete without its queen," replied her brother, gallantly. "Your adorer will have been fasting himself to death for the last two hours, fearing that you would not come."

"It will do them good," she replied, with a laugh; "they will learn wisdom in time."

"And Sir Richard?" questioned her brother, looking earnestly into her smiling face.

She crimsoned—a flash of anger, not of love, and turned emphatically away.

"Sir Richard may wait forever. He has had his answer already."

Her brother bit his lips.

"I think you are foolish, Constance—Sir Richard loves you, and would make you a very good match."

Constance twined her hands around her brother's arm, tears trembling in her eyes.

"I shall never marry, William, never. Please don't ask me, dear. I am very happy here with you."

He stooped and kissed the piteous face that was turned so timidly up to his.

"There! Don't spoil your pretty eyes," he cried; "some one will induce you to change that resolution, I hope."

He drew her hand within his arm and led her down the broad staircase into the hall, where a powdered footman stood with wraps upon his arm, ready to see them into the carriage.

The street door was partly open, and an altercation and rough voices speaking sharply caused the gentleman to hesitate.

"What is the meaning of this disturbance, Barnes?" he asked.

"It is a man, sir, as is himpertinent, and won't go away; and John is making him."

"What does the fellow want? What business has he here?"

"He says he wants to see Miss Power, sir."

"To see me?" exclaimed Constance, while her brother frowned.

"To see Miss Power? What insufferable

insolence! And at this time of night too!" "He is most howdacious, sir, and says he knows she was a coming out, and would wait until she did."

"Constance, my love," said Mr. Power, "you had better step into the library. I will soon settle this affair."

He opened the room door for her, and then going out on the steps, stood for a moment in angry amazement at the scene before him.

An old man, bareheaded, was struggling with two of the most servants of the house, gesticulating violently, while a small crowd of curious listeners, collected by the uproar, were grinning and laughing and shouting to the combatants to have fair play.

"I will see her! I will see her!" the old man was exclaiming. "It's a matter of life and death, and I'll stay till I do."

"John, go for the police!" shouted the stentorian voice of Mr. Power.

At the sound of their master's voice the men let go their hold of the man, while four or five young urthins started off in search of the missing functionary. The old man, half exhausted, staggered to the pings.

"Don't send for the police," he cried; "I ain't a going to rob. For God's sake, sir, tell me, if the young lady is coming out?" This to Mr. Power.

"What business is that of yours?" angrily replied that gentleman. "How dare you create a disturbance in a respectable neighborhood? I will have you imprisoned."

"Prison me if you will," cried the man earnestly; "but let me speak one word to the young lady, sir, for the love of heaven."

"The man is mad," muttered Mr. Power to himself; "mad or drunk."

The old fellow caught the last word.

"No, I ain't drunk, yer honor," cried he; "I earn my honest livelihood, and that's more than every finkny can say; and he glanced indignantly at the footman who still kept by his side.

"I'm in my sober senses, and I know what I want. I want to see Miss Power."

"It is one of those beggarly pupers Constance is so fond of," thought Mr. Power. "This is the fruit of ladies going about visiting the sick—a precious piece of business to be sure."

"If you will promise to go away quietly, I will let you off," he commenced; but at that moment a hand was placed upon his arm, and a soft voice questioned:

"What is the matter, William?"

At the door stood Constance, in her snowy opera cloak and golden hair, her sweet eyes turned wonderingly on the spectacle before her.

With a cry of joy the old man struggled up the steps.

"O Miss! are you Miss Power? It's you I want to see."

"Really, Constance," he said in a low tone, "you are forgetting yourself. To come out here before all these people—really—"

"O William," cried the girl, "don't be cross; but Barnes tells me the man said it was a matter of life and death. Do see him, dear, if only for a moment. It must be something very serious to bring him at this hour of the night."

Mr. Power, though hasty in his temper, was a just and reasonable man; he saw plainly now the man was not intoxicated; and though he was annoyed at being disturbed at this unreasonable hour, he could not but acknowledge the fluency of his sister's argument, and that the man was at least entitled to a hearing.

"Well, Constance," said he, "let it be so. Go back into the library; and I will question him first myself."

He told the footman to call the man inside and close the door. After a while Mr. Power came to his sister.

"I cannot make him out," he said, in answer to her anxious glance. "He tells a rambling story about some girl he has picked out of the water, and whom, he says, you know. You had better see him, Constance."

"O yes, yes! Ask him to come in at once."

He was an old, gray-haired man, whose garments betokened extreme poverty, but whose face looked honest and sincere, despite the fit of that excitement had given it.

"Are you Miss Power?" he exclaimed hurriedly, without waiting for her to speak.

"Yes, I am Constance Power; what can I do for you?"

"O, then, if you be her, I was to give your ladyship this bit of a letter," taking a dirty scrap of paper from his pocket; and you'll have to make haste, please, if you want to see her alive."

Constance opened it in profound astonishment, which increased to a look of intense horror as she read the contents.

"I am dying, dying fast," it said; "but I cannot go till I have told you what is on my mind. Please don't refuse, but come as quickly as you can. The whole happiness of your future life depends on your seeing

"O my poor Pauline!" exclaimed Miss Power. "The girl that let me so suddenly four years ago. Where is she, my good-girl? I will go at once."

"She's in my house, my lady, close by the water-side. She had been and drowned herself, and I picked her up, and me and my Missis has minded her ever since; they'd have taken her to prison if we'd peached on her, Miss, you know, and she's so quiet and good; and the doctors has been so very good to us, and given us a bit of money, and—"

"Yes, yes," interrupted the trembling girl; "you shall tell me all about it as we go."

"Nonsense, Constance!" exclaimed Mr. Power. "Who is this Pauline you are talking about?"

"Have you forgotten her, William? The girl who was my companion when poor papa died. Ah, I forgot; she left us just as you returned from abroad; but you must have heard me speak of Pauline Barry. I loved her like a sister. She is ill—dying; I must go to her at once."

"You will do nothing of the sort," retorted her brother. "I shall not allow you to be so foolish."

"I will—I must!" she said; and the little white teeth were set determinedly, and strange defiance flashed in the violet eyes. "It will be too late in the morning."

"You will go, and in these trappings!" and he pointed contemptuously to the clouds of lace that floated round her fairy form, and the pearls and opals gleaming on her fair white neck and arms, and in the tresses of her amber hair.

"I will cover them all over with my large waterproof cloak," she said, entreatingly. "No one will recognize me, and Phillips can go with me!"

"And I will also, if you will be so insane."

"No, no; you would only be in the way!" she exclaimed hurriedly. "Do be sensible, darling! I am not afraid with Phillips. Be quick; dear, and ring the bell; every moment may be too late."

"And it will, Miss," cried the man, respectfully; "if we doesn't look sharp. My Misses said as how she couldn't last long."

"You are decidedly out of your mind, Constance," said Mr. Power, when he saw she was determined; "going off at this time of night to listen to the rhapsodies of a dying woman."

"Which is the most mad," she retorted, flushing—"wasting God's holy time in frivolous amusements, or soothing the last hours of the souls for whom Christ died?"

Mr. Power shrugged his shoulders.

"As you please," he cried; "but I insist on your taking one of the men with you as well. I will send away the carriage; you had better have a cab, it will attract less attention."

A short time afterward a cab drew up before a dingy looking house in a narrow, dirty street running parallel with the river on the south side of the Thames, and a man, descending from the box, assisted a veiled and muffled figure to alight.

"Wait for me here," said Constance in a whisper to her maid; there is no occasion for you to come inside."

"But Master said—"

"I am your Mistress," replied Constance, haughtily; "do as you are told."

The girl shrunk back. To tell the truth, she was quite as ready to stop as to go; far preferring a chat with the footman to witnessing the death struggle of the poor; she saw plenty of that when Miss Power dragged her into the loathsome alleys and wretched streets to be found even in Belgrave.

The old man—Parker, he said his name was—opened the door by means of a string pulled through a hole. No need of bolts and bars there, except to keep the thieves inside when justice demanded them.

"Mind the step, my lady," he said. "It is not often the likes of you come to such a place as this."

"I'm not afraid," said Constance, gently; yet as she spoke she trembled, and her heart sank at the impenetrable darkness before her.

The noise they made had evidently been heard, for a door opened, and a woman came cautiously down the stairs, carrying a sweating candle in a broken candle-stick.

"Is that you, Jim?" she called in a loud whisper.

"Ay, my gal; and I brought the lady with me."

"That's right," cried the woman.

And Constance found herself face to face with a poorly-dressed but motherly looking woman.

"How is she?" was the first question.

"Very badly, Miss, very badly. She's been dropped into a bad ze; but they say she can't last till morn. She's been asking for you, Miss, all night long."

Up two flights of creaking, rickety stairs, and they stopped at a door in the back part of the house, which the woman opened, and, holding the light above her head, suffered Constance to pass through first. A dirty blanket thrown over an old clothes-horse served as a screen to prevent the drafts that whistled through the crannies of the door from reaching the bed, on which lay the pallid face of the dying woman, breathing heavily. The tears rolled down Constance's face cheeks as she gazed on the altered features, the thin, wasted figure of one, who when last she beheld her was radiant with youth and health. Large drops of perspiration were on her forehead; her nose was drawn and pinched, her eyes sunken, her lips livid and swollen with fever, her hair lay in a tangled mass around her haggard face, over which was gradually creeping that mysterious ash grey—the bridal veil of death.

"She has suffered a deal, poor dear!" said the woman in a low tone; "it will be a blessing when the Lord is pleased to take her. Will you sit down, Miss?"

Constance looked around and shuddered. Bare boards, a broken table, two more broken chairs, some wooden boxes piled up in a corner to form a cupboard, a rusty fender and a row of saucepans, jugs, and physic bottles, were all the furniture of this miserable abode. Across the room on a line composed of pieces of rope knotted together, hung some indescribable articles of human clothing, (there is no fashion-book for the poor.) And in the midst of all this squalor and poverty, three pots of white and purple hyacinth stood in the narrow window-sill, filling the air with their delicious fragrance.

As she looked she thought how from the simple hearts of these poor people rose up daily from the incense of the flowers, the sweet perfume of a noble self-denying charity, the whiteness of truth and the purple of sacrifice, to the feet of the living God.

Suddenly the dying girl started convulsively, and opened her large, dark eyes.

"Who is that?" she cried, wildly, as her gaze fell on Miss Power's muffled form.

"I, Constance Power, your friend, Pauline. O my poor girl, what has brought you to this?"

"What brought me! The blackest hearted villain that ever trod God's earth. Thank heaven, you have come. O how terrified I was that they would not find you! I can die—I can die happy now."

Constance was terribly affected, her tears rolled over the thin and wasted hand she held in hers, while she strove to comfort the unhappy woman.

"Hush! don't excite yourself," cried she; "you shall tell me all about it by-and-by. How often have I thought of you, dear Pauline, and wondered why you left us so mysteriously."

"Yes, I will tell you all," replied Pauline, striving to raise herself in bed; "I must be quick. I know there is not much time. Then she snatched her hand from Miss Power's grasp. "Don't touch me," she cried; "I'm not fit to be touched by you. Miss Constance, you were always good—do you think God pardons such as I?"

"Of course he does," replied Constance, weeping. "There are none so vile that His mercy cannot reach if they only repent."

"I think I've repented," murmured the girl.

"If I had been spared, I would have led a different life. They told you, didn't they, I tried to drown myself? It was an awful sin; but I was driven mad. Yes, I'm sorry now. Miss Constance. They have been so kind to me here—the poor old man and his wife. And they showed me how wicked and wrong I was for wishing to take my life, and I want to repent. Hush! what is that?"

Constance listened, but heard nothing; she had been too engrossed with the poor sufferer to heed extraneous noises.

"It is nothing, dear."

"I thought I heard a step," murmured Pauline, speaking with difficulty. "O this pain—it if it would but cease."

She fell back exhausted, and Constance held a taceup, containing a little cordial, to her lips; it revived her, and she opened her eyes once more.

In her agitation and anxiety, the head of Constance's cloak had fallen back, and the sweet, fair face, with its halo of golden hair, was revealed to Pauline's view.

"Take it all off," she said, presently; "I want to see you as you are."

With a blush at the strange request, and yet not liking to refuse a dying woman, Miss Power undid the clasp, and let the cloak fall to her feet.

Pauline gazed at her for a while in silence, excitement working in her features.

"You are very beautiful," she said at last, "more beautiful than ever. Miss Power, I have ruined all your life. Can you forgive me?"

Constance thought she was wandering in her head, and laid her hand soothingly upon her.

"My poor Pauline," she cried; "what have I to forgive? If you could only be moved from here, perhaps you might get better, and then—"

But the girl laughed a wild, hoarse laugh.

"I am dying," she cried; "dying fast; I only hope I shall live long enough to tell you all. Take away your hand; it burns me; I cannot bear."

And again she fell exhausted on the pillow.

Presently she spoke again, and the words she uttered caused Miss Power to start and tremble, while the blood rushed to her face.

"You had a lover once—Captain Stapleton?"

"Ah, yes, you knew—but what of him? He never loved me, Pauline. And the sweet face was bowed in her jeweled fingers.

"He did, Constance Power, he loved you dearly; he wrote letter after letter, and—I destroyed them."

With a wild cry of anguish Constance started to her feet. "O Pauline how could you be so cruel?"

"Because he tempted me—he, Sir Richard Ashford, the man I loved, who swore he would make me his wife—told that I was to believe him—tempted me with false oaths and deceitful promises to destroy Captain Stapleton's letters. He told me that he hated him, that he wanted to ruin him with you, and I lent myself to the scheme."

"O sinful, wicked woman!" moaned the wretched Constance; "you know not what you have done."

"Yes I do, replied Pauline; but I did not care. I would have broken all the hearts in England if it were in my power and he had bid me do it. I would have killed my own sister," she hissed. "But I was justly served. He loves you, Constance Power, and would marry you if he could. Shall I tell you what he did to me? He kicked me out into the street

MISCELLANY.

THE OTHER SHORE.

What is it like—that other shore?
Straining my eyes I can but see
Skies and ocean that evermore
Embrace and hide the land beyond me.
Vainly I wish that an echo note
Of the song they sing on the other side
Over the waters to me may float.
As I wistfully listen and turn aside.

My Father's home that I have not seen!
Little I care what its beauties are—
Whether its fields are always green
Or the hills are golden that gleam afar—
Only I know One waits there for me,
Whom my eyes have yearned long to see,
And the country must needs be wondrous fair,
Where Christ the Lord shall welcome me.

What can I do, but watch all day
Rippling that lovely bay the shore,
The unconscious children at their play
While I sit waiting for my Father's home?
Waiting still at the water-side—
When will the bottom come for me,
And bear me off on the flowing tide
To the land where my best beloved be?

Nay, I'm my Father for me will send
Who I have watched the task He gave,
When I have proved me His child and friend
By the Christ-like spirit, meek, yet brave.
Why should I list to the waves' sad sighs,
Dreaming waiting for what delays?
Let me rather with strength arise,
And work for Him the remaining days.

—Marianne F. Fanningham.

THE HALLOW-EVE MYSTERY.
A LEGEND OF THE BLACK HALL.

CHAPTER I.

THE BERNERS OF THE BURNING HEARTS.
"Their love was like the lava flood
That burns in Etna's breast of flame."

Near the end of a dark autumn-day, not many years ago, a young couple, returning from their bridal tour, arrived by steamer at the old city of Norfolk; and, taking a hack, drove directly to the best inn.

The gentleman registered himself and his party as Mr. and Mrs. Lyon Berners of Black Hall, Virginia, and two servants.

"We shall need a private parlor and chamber communicating for our own use, and a couple of bedrooms for our servants," said Mr. Berners, as he handed his hat and cane to the bowing waiter.

"Certainly, sir. What would you like for tea?" asked the landlord.

"Oh, anything you please, so that it is nice and neatly served," said Mr. Berners, with a slightly impatient wave of his hand as if he would have been rid of his obsequious host.

"Ah! anything I please! It is easy to see what ails him. He lives upon love just now; but he'll care more about his bill of fare a few weeks hence," chuckled the landlord, as he left the private parlor to execute his guest's orders.

The bridegroom was no sooner left alone with his bride than he seated her in the easiest arm-chair, and began with affectionate zeal to untie her bonnet strings and unclasp her mantle.

"You make my maid a useless appendage, dear Lyon," said the little lady, smiling up in his eyes. "You love me so much, dear Lyon! You love me so much! Yet not too much either! for oh! if you should ever cease to love me, or even if you were ever to love me less, I—dare not think what I should do!" she muttered in a long deep, shuddering tone.

"Why, Sybil, my wife—you beautiful mad creature! You are a true daughter of your house! A Berners of the burning heart! A Berners of the boiling blood! A Berners of whom it has been said, that it is almost as fatal to be loved as to be hated by—"

Suddenly in the midst of their converse they heard the sound of weeping—low, deep, heart-broken weeping.

Both paused, looked at each other and listened.

The sound seemed to come from a room on the opposite side of the passage to their own apartment.

"What is that?" inquired Sybil, looking up to her husband's face.

"It seems to be some woman in distress," answered Lyon.

"Oh, see what it is, dear, will you?" entreated Sybil.

She was herself so happy, that it was really dreadful to be reminded just then that sorrow should exist in this world at all.

But if she could have foreseen the woe that was to come to herself, to her husband, and to the object of her sympathy, she would have held Lyon back, as with the grip of fate, from the mission on which she now sent him.

For the weeper was a beautiful woman—a deserted wife—named Rosa Blondelle, who, although but a few days landed from the vessel which had brought her from Europe, had been robbed of her jewels and money by her husband, and then left to her fate in that Norfolk hotel.

Sybil was deeply moved by the lady's story, and insisted on taking Mrs. Blondelle home with her to Black Hall, and Mr. Berners gave his assent to her wishes.

But before they got ready to set out on their journey, Sybil bitterly repented of the arrangement. Mrs. Blondelle was so enchantingly lovely, that Mr. Berners at once began to yield to her charms; and Sybil, for the first time, saw him pay the homage of admiration to other beauty than her own.

This kindled the fires of jealousy in her heart, and by the time they reached Black Hall, those fires had become fanned into an insupportable flame.

And no Berners had ever been known to forgive an object of jealousy.

Black Hall, the abode of Mr. and Mrs. Berners, was a palatial old Virginia mansion, situated in the heart of the Black Valley, a few miles from Blackville, the county town. It had been in Mrs. Berners' family for generations, and was renowned for the scenes of gaiety and hospitality which had transpired beneath its roof.

Mrs. Berners, the last of her race, to give vent to the emotions of her restless, jealous heart, resolved to inaugurate the festivities of the old-time, and for that purpose announced a mask ball for the ensuing All-Hallow Eve, and at once set about getting all things in readiness.

One day while she was absent at Blackville, making purchases, Lyon and Rosa became so absorbed in one another, as to become oblivious of the entry of Mrs. Winterose, the old housekeeper, who found them sitting closely side by side, her hand clasped in his.

On Sybil's return, the old housekeeper described this scene to her, with many exaggerations. The revelation seemed to freeze Sybil into ice.

"Oh, my heart! my heart!" she moaned, turning deathly pale. And then, after a long silence, she bitterly added, "Deceived! Betrayed! Scorned! Laughed at! Well, well!" she continued, nodding grimly; "well, well, since deceit is the fashion of the day, I too will be in the fashion; I too will wear a mask of smiles! But behind that mask, I will watch! Oh, how I will watch! Not at my fancy!

hall alone will I play a part, but before it, and perhaps, after it! None shall ever know how I watch, what I see, until I descend with the full sweep of the eagle. And henceforth let me remember that I am a daughter of the house of Berners, who never failed a friend or spared a foe. And oh, let the spirit of my fathers support me, for I must endure until I can avenge me!"

And oh! could those triflers with sacred love—those wanderers on the brink of a fearful abyss—have seen the look of her face then, they would have fled from each other for ever, rather than have dared the desperation of her soul.

But they saw nothing, knew nothing, suspected nothing!

And thus all three drifted toward the awful brink of ruin.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST FATAL HALLOW EVE.

It was All-Hallow-Eve, a night long anticipated with delight by the whole neighborhood, and much longer with horror by the whole county.

It was the occasion of Sybil Berners' mask ball; and Black Hall, the Black Valley, and the town of Blackville were all in a state of unprecedented excitement; for this was the first entertainment of the kind that had ever been given in the locality, and the gentry of three contiguous counties had been invited to assist at it.

The throng at Black Hall was great, and the characters assumed by the maskers were various and well sustained.

But by far the most beautiful, far the most terrible figure in the pagantry of the evening, was that of Sybil Berners! She had chosen for character the unprecedented part of the impersonation of the Spirit of Fire. It suited well with her whole nature. Her costume was but the outward sign of the inward fervor.

Sybil had confided the secret of her costume to no one but her husband, who was himself attired as "Harold the Saxon," while Mrs. Blondelle assumed the character of "Edith the Fair."

Sybil had not been long in the room before the equipping of her husband and Mrs. Blondelle drove her nearly to distraction. Observing that whenever she came near them, they were of their guard, Sybil exchanged disguises with one of her guests and intimate friends, Beatrice Pendleton, and was thus enabled to watch her husband and his companion without the least restraint.

Sybil observed that a masker representing Death, whom nobody seemed to know, watched Mrs. Blondelle as closely as she did herself; and she subsequently had occasion to remember and shudder at that fact.

Seeing the watched couple seat themselves on a small sofa in one corner of the room, she glided to an ottoman near them, in time to hear Mrs. Blondelle say:

"No, Lyon, your wife is not my friend—she is my deadly enemy. She is fiercely jealous of my affection for me, though it is the only happiness of my unhappy life. And she will make you throw me off yet."

"Never!—no one, not even my wife, shall ever do that. I swear it by all my hope of—"

Sybil glided away. She could bear no more.

Supper time drawing near, when all the guests would have to unmask, Sybil and Beatrice exchanged costumes and went down to the drawing room together just as the last quadrille was completed, and the company began to march to the supper room.

As each couple marched into the supper room they took off their masks, and handed them to attendants, placed for that purpose to the right and left of the door. Thus when the company filled the room every face was shown—but "Death" was nowhere to be seen.

At last the party broke up. Only a few of the guests remained all night. These were shown to their rooms, and the others having gone, as fate would have it, Mrs. Blondelle went into the little reception parlor to meet Mr. Berners, who assured her that henceforth he could never extend to her more than a brother's affection.

"Then give me a brother's kiss," she sighed. "That is not much to ask, and I have no one to kiss me now. So give me a brother's kiss, and let me go," she pleaded plaintively.

He hesitated for a moment, and then bending over her, he said:

"It is the first, and for your sake must be the last, Rosa!" and he pressed his lips to hers.

It was the last as well as the first; for at the meeting of their lips they were stricken asunder as by the fall of a thunderbolt!

And Sybil, blazing with wrath, like a spirit from the Lake of Fire, stood before them.

She looked not human—with her whole face and form heaving, palpitating, flashing forth the lightnings of anger.

"SYBIL!" exclaimed her husband, thunderstruck and appalled.

She waved her hand towards him, as if to implore or command silence.

"I have nothing to say to you," she muttered in low and husky tones, as if ashes were in her throat. "But to you," she said, and her voice rose clear and strong as she turned and stretched out her arm towards Rosa, who was leaning in affright against the wall—"to you, traitress, who have come between the true husband and his wife—in the morning you must leave the house you have desecrated! for if you do not, or if ever I find your false face here again, I will tread down and crush out your life with less remorse than ever I set heel upon a spider! I will, as I am a Berners! And now begone! and never let me see your form again!"

Rosa Blondelle, who had stood spell-bound by the terrible gaze and overwhelming words of Sybil, the wronged wife, now suddenly threw up her hands, and with a low cry, fled from the room.

And Sybil dropped her arm and her voice at the same instant, and stood motionless and dumb.

And now, at length, Lyon Berners spoke again.

"Sybil!" he said, "this house is yours! You must do as you please. But this I tell you: that in the same hour which sees that poor and friendless young creature driven from the shelter of this roof, I leave it too, and leave it for ever!"

If Lyon Berners really meant this, or thought to bring his fiery-hearted wife to terms by the threat, he was mistaken in his character.

"Oh, go!" she answered, bitterly—"go as soon as you like, Lyon Berners. Good-night, and good-bye," she said, and with a wave of her hand she passed from the room.

He was mad to have spoken as he did; madder still to let her leave him! so how mad, he was soon to learn.

Lyon Berners remained walking up and down the room some time longer. The lights were all out, and the servants gone to bed. Yet

still he continued to pace up and down the parlor floor, until suddenly piercing shrieks smote his ear.

In great terror he started forward and instinctively rushed towards Rosa's room, when the door was suddenly thrown open by Rosa herself, pale, bleeding from a wound in her breast.

"Great Heaven! What is this?" he cried, as, agitated with amazement and sorrow, he supported the ghastly and dying form, and laid it on the sofa, and then sunk on his knees beside it.

"Who has done this?" he wildly demanded, almost paralyzed with horror, and he knelt beside her, and tried to stanch the gushing wound from which her life-blood was fast welling.

She opened her bloodless lips, now paling in death, and gasped forth the words:

"She—Sybil—your wife. I told you she would do it, and she has done it. Sybil Berners has murdered me," she whispered. Then raising herself with a last dying effort, she cried aloud, "Hear all! Sybil Berners has murdered me!" And with this charge upon her lips, she fell back dead.

Even in that supreme moment Lyon Berners' first thought, almost his only thought, was for his wife. He looked up to see who was there—who had heard this awful, this fatal charge.

All were there! guests and servants, men and women, drawn there by the dreadful shrieks. All had heard the horrible accusation.

And all stood panic-stricken, as they shrank away from one who stood in their midst.

It was she, Sybil, the accused, whose very aspect accused her more loudly than the dying woman had done; for she stood there, still in her fiery masquerade dress, her face pallid, her eyes blazing, her wild black hair loose and streaming, her crimsoned hand raised and grasping a blood-stained dagger.

"O, wretched woman! most wretched woman! What is that which you have done?" groaned Lyon Berners in unutterable agony—ignominy for the dead beauty before him, but for the living wife, whom he felt that he had driven to this deed of desperation.

"Lyon Berners, do you believe me guilty?" she asked.

He looked up and their eyes met. If he had really believed her guilty, he did not now. He answered briefly and firmly:

"No, Sybil! Heaven knows that I do not; but explain this horrible business—if you can!"

"The explanation is this," she said, emphatically. And then her voice arose clear, firm, and distinct, as she continued:

"I was in my chamber, which is immediately above that occupied by Mrs. Blondelle. My chamber is approached by two ways, first by the front passage and stairs, and secondly by a narrow staircase running up from Mrs. Blondelle's room. I do not know how long I had sat there, when I heard a piercing shriek from some one in the room below. Instinctively I rushed down the communicating stairs and into Mrs. Blondelle's room, and up to her bed, where I saw by the light of the taper she was lying. Her eyes were closed, and I thought at first that she had fainted from some frightful ailment, almost at the same instant, I saw this dagger—"

here Sybil stopped and picked up the dagger that she had dropped a few minutes before—"

"driven to its hilt in her chest. I drew it out instantly the blood from the open wound spurted up, covering my hand and sleeve with the accusing stains you see. With the flowing of the blood her eyes flew widely open! She gazed affrightedly at me for an instant, and then with the last effort of her life, for which terror lent her strength, she started up and fled shrieking to this room. I still holding the dagger that I had drawn from her bosom, followed her here. And—you know the rest," said Sybil; and overcome with excitement, she sank upon the nearest chair to rest.

Her story had evidently made a very great impression upon the company present. But Lyon Berners suddenly exclaimed:

"Good Heavens! that lady's mistaken charge has put us all off the scent, and allowed the murderer to escape. But it may not yet be too late! Some clue may be left in her room by which we may trace the criminal! Come, neighbors, and let us search the premises."

And Lyon Berners, leaving the shuddering women of the party in the room with Sybil and the dead, and followed by all the men, went to search the house and grounds for traces of the assassin.

But the search proved fruitless. No trace of an intruder could be found, nor was there any evidence of robbery. Furthermore, all the windows were fastened on the inside. There had been no way of entering the murdered woman's room except by the stairway leading from Sybil's chamber.

Captain Pendleton, an old lover of Sybil's, and a brother of Beatrice, saw that there was no safety except in instant flight. He whispered to Lyon to take Sybil to her room, and then to meet him on the back piazza. This was done, and then the captain unfolded his already matured plans. Lyon adopted them at once; and under the skillful management of Captain Pendleton and Beatrice, they got out of the house unseen, and were soon on their way towards a place of concealment, known as the Haunted Chapel, where new and unexpected horrors awaited them.

CHAPTER III.

THE HAUNTED CHAPEL.

The Haunted Chapel, to which Mr. and Mrs. Berners were going, was in a dark and gloomy gorge on the other side of the mountain.

They arrived safely at the old ruin, where in the course of the day they were joined by Mrs. Berners' faithful servant Joe, whose affection for his mistress had led him to play the spy, and find out where she was going, and secretly follow her with provisions and means for making her somewhat comfortable.

The fugitives felt so depressed that even the cheerful supper supplied by Joe could not relieve them of the overshadowing gloom which had settled on their hearts. A strange drowsiness oppressed them, and they sank into a deep sleep, as though they had been drugged with some powerful narcotic. Mr. Berners was aroused before daylight by Joe, who instantly drew him outside the chapel in alarm.

Sybil, left alone in the Haunted Chapel, continued to sleep soundly. How long she had slept she never could tell, when she was suddenly and fearfully aroused.

She felt hands at work about her person, and under her limbs; they were lifting her from the mattress. Her eyes flared open in wild affright, and she saw two black shrouded forms, the one at her head the other at her feet.

She tried to cry out in her agony of terror; but her voice died away in her bosom, and all her powers seemed palsied. They raised her up and bore her on—great heaven! whither?

To the open door of the vault under the chapel, from whose haunted depths a spectral light gleamed!

They bore her down the dreadful steps, and laid her on the deadly floor!

The iron door clanged loudly, and resounding through the dismal arches.

"We have her now!" muttered a hoarse voice. A hollow laugh responded.

And Sybil swooned with horror! When Sybil recovered from her death-like swoon, she found herself in a spacious cavern of such exceeding beauty and splendor, that for an instant she lost sight of her terrors in her astonishment and admiration, and then her eyes settled upon a figure who seemed the sole occupant of the place.

This was a young girl, who, with her red cloak thrown like on the moss, was seated upon it cross-legged in the Turkish fashion. Her elfin face, her malign eyes, her wild black hair and picturesque costume, were all so in keeping with the aspect of the place, that one might have deemed her the spirit of the cavern.

The two women looked at each other in silence for perhaps half a minute; and then Sybil spoke:

"What place is this? Who are you? Why am I brought hither?"

"One question at a time," answered the girl. "What place this is concerns you little; I am a Gipsy and my name is Gentiliska!"

"Why you are brought here, ah! that concerns you very much! It concerns your liberty, and perhaps your life."

"I do not believe it! You have had me torn away from my husband! Where is he now?" haughtily demanded Mrs. Berners.

"He is likely in the hands of the constables, who are by this time in possession of the Haunted Chapel. But fear nothing! I am they will release again, for they have no right to detain him; but you they would have kept, if they had caught you. The constables were coming there for us, but they would have found you if we had not brought you away with us. That was my doing. I made your removal the condition of my silence."

"But when will you communicate with my husband to relieve his dreadful suspense?"

"As soon as it shall be safe to do so. Our first care must be our own safety, but our second will be yours."

Sybil said no more at this moment; but sat looking at the speaker, and thinking of all that had befallen her in the Haunted Chapel.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ROBBER CAPTAIN.

He was the mildest mannered man that ever stepped ashore, or out a boat.

Sybil had passed the day in the robbers' den with her strange companion, who astonished her by stating that the captain of the band had been at her masquerade. Late in the afternoon, dinner was announced at which several of the robbers appeared, with Moloch, a gigantic ruffian at their head. Moloch was the lieutenant of the band, and in the absence of the captain ruled with brutal sway. Becoming inflamed with wine, he took a seat by the side of Sybil and attempted to imprint a kiss upon her lips.

Sybil struggled in terror and the gipsy girl cried out:

"Men! why don't you interfere? He is rude to the lady!"

"We never meddle between other men and their sweethearts. Do we mates?" called out one.

"No, no, no!" answered the others.

"Oh, if Satan were here!" cried the girl, in despair.

"SATAN IS HERE!" responded a voice close by.

And the robber captain stood among them as if he had risen from the earth. Moloch dropped Sybil, and covered in the most abject manner.

Sybil looked up, and turned cold from head to foot; for in the handsome, stately, graceful form of the brigand chief she recognized the finished gentleman who, in the character of "Death," had danced with her at her own mask ball, and—the probable murderer of Rosa Blondelle.

While the walls of the cavern seemed whirling around Sybil, the robber captain calmly came up to her, lifted his hat and said:

"Spirit of Fire, I am happy to welcome you to your own appropriate dwelling place; and then, without expecting an answer, he turned to Moloch, and said in his smoothest tones:

"Be so good as to give me this seat."

But Sybil saw that the giant turned pale and trembled like the fabled mountain in labor, as he left the seat by her side, and slunk into another at some distance."

The wine passed freely at the robbers' table and the men grew merrier, wilder, more uproarious. Sybil became very much alarmed; and not so much by the noisy orgies of these rude revellers, as by the dreadful gaze of Moloch fixed upon her from the opposite end of the table where he sat, and the offensive language of Satan's eyes whenever they turned towards her.

At length, unable to bear the trial longer, she arose from her seat and courtesying to these brigands as she would have done to any set of gentlemen of whom she was taking leave, Sybil left the cavern, followed by Gentiliska, the gipsy girl.

"I must take you to another grotto. You cannot occupy mine tonight," said the girl, with evident reluctance.

"But, oh! why, why may I not stay with you? I am afraid to sleep alone in this terrible place!" pleaded Sybil.

"I have a reason, but I cannot tell it to you now. Yes I will, too! I will tell you to all risks! Then it is this: My chamber is not safe for you! I myself am not strong enough to protect you! You might be carried off forcibly from my side! I must hide you where no devil may find you to-night!" whispered the girl.

"Oh, do not leave me here alone!" pleaded Sybil. If I must stay, stay with me! I do not fear death; but oh! I fear these men! I do not leave me!"

"I must, for your own safety. They must not miss me or suspicions will be aroused."

Then pointing to a bed of moss, and recommending her guest to lie down and seek repose, the gipsy girl glided away through the labyrinth of caves and was lost to sight and hearing.

Sybil's first impulse was to start up and run after her hostess, but she restrained herself, and sank half fainting upon the heap of moss.

There was but a faint sparkling of light in the cave, coming from a crevice in the roof through which the moonlight entered.

"Seek repose," had been the advice of Gentiliska.

Sybil dared not seek it if she could, and could not have found it if she had. Hour after hour passed in trance-like stillness and silence, when at length she fancied she heard a creeping stealthy step approaching. Nearly frozen with terror, she listened and watched more intently than ever. Alone, helpless, in darkness and solitude, what horrid fate must meet her! The creeping, cautious footstep drew nearer, nearer!

Oh, Heaven! It was no fancy! The entrance of the cavern was more deeply darkened for

one moment, and then the huge form of Moloch stood within the cavern and nearly filled it up.

Paralyzed with horror, Sybil could neither move nor cry out—not even when the monster approached her, and put his profane hand upon her face. The above is all of this story that will be published in our columns. The continuation of it from where it leaves off here can be found only in the New York Ledger, which is for sale at all the bookstores and news depots. Ask for the number dated June 26, and in it you will find the continuation of this beautiful tale. The Ledger has the best stories of any paper in the world; and Henry Ward Beecher, James Parton and Fanny Fern, have articles in every number.

MAINE CENTRAL RAILROAD.
COMMENCING MAY 11th, 1869.

On and after Monday, May 11th, the Passenger Train will leave Waterville for Portland and Boston at 10:00 A.M. and return will be due at 5:00 A.M. Accommodation Train for Bangor will leave at 6:00 A.M. and return will be due at 6:00 P.M. Freight Train for Portland will leave at 5:45 A.M. Through Tickets sold at all stations on this line for Boston, May, 1869. EDWIN NOYES, Sup't.

PORTLAND AND KEN. RAILROAD
SUMMER ARRANGEMENT
COMMENCING MAY 8, 1869.

On and after Monday, May 11th, the Passenger Train will leave Waterville at 10:00 A.M., connecting at Brunswick with the Portland and Ken. R.R. for Portland and Boston at 10:00 A.M. and return will be due at 5:00 A.M. Accommodation Train for Bangor will leave at 6:00 A.M. and return will be due at 6:00 P.M. Freight Train for Portland will leave at 5:45 A.M. Through Tickets sold at all stations on this line for Boston, May, 1869. EDWIN NOYES, Sup't.

FOR BOSTON.
SUMMER ARRANGEMENT
COMMENCING MAY 8, 1869.

The new and superior steam-going Steamer, having been fitted up at great expense with a large number of beautiful State Rooms, will run the season as follows: Leave Waterville, every day at 10 o'clock, and India Wharf, Boston, every day at 12 o'clock, P.M. (Sundays excepted.) Fare to Cabin, \$1.00; Deck Fare, .50. Freight taken as usual. L. LINCOLN, Sup't.

MAINE STEAMSHIP COMPANY.
SEMI-WEEKLY LINE.

On and after the 15th inst., the Steamer, Dirigo and Francisco, will until further notice, run as follows: Leave Waterville, every MONDAY and THURSDAY at 4