

On the Old Wall.

Miss Parker ran her hand over her hair and looked out of the window over the sea rolling and glistening beneath the moon until it was hidden in the shadow of the old city wall. She was satisfied with herself, and so naturally with everything else.

Off in the old part of the city, some one was playing a guitar and singing a low Spanish song. It seemed to her as if St. Augustine was for a moment transformed into the old city of a hundred years ago. The music and perfume of the flowers and the water, all set her dreaming of the time when the helmeted guard paced the wall singing perhaps that very song.

Her maid touched her upon the arm and whispered that it was time to go. Already the uncertain notes of the musicians tuning their instruments came through the halls to her. The dining room of the Ponce de Lion had been transformed into a ball room for it was the evening of St. Valentine's day and the best and largest dance of the winter season.

Just before entering the room Howard Stafford met Miss Parker and her mother and they went in together. The engagement of the young man and the girl had been announced some months before. Her mother liked him very much, and his family was excellent, and Miss Parker herself liked him even more than any other man she had known, but beyond that there was nothing for or against the arrangement made by the mothers, and she would settle no definite date for the wedding day. She was satisfied, she said, at least, with the present. The future was to be considered when it became present.

This night every thing was so pleasant, and Howard was so considerate and thoughtful that she took more pleasure in his company than she ever had before. And when he was dancing with others she watched him, for he was a splendid dancer, and the girls who knew him were always pleased to waltz with him.

When at last her mother told her they must go it was with regret she went away. It was still early but her mother was very strict in stopping before it grew late; and when she reached her room she threw open the wide French window and drew a little chair to it and sat and watched and thought.

Suddenly, the train of her thoughts was broken by men talking below her. She could see two forms standing on the broad walk and their words came up to her clear and distinct.

"Sir, you will have to go, after what has been said!" reached her ears in angry tones, and she recognized the voice of Harry Stafford.

"I am only too willing" was the reply equally as passionate, but she did not recognize the speaker.

"Where and when?" said Stafford haughtily.

"At once and on the old wall down there. It is as light as day."—"Henry," went on the speaker, apparently to another person, "bring down my case and then leave us."

The two speakers walked slowly down towards the sea line not a hundred yards away, and a third man whom she had not seen before, made his way to the hotel entrance.

All this filled the mind of the girl with wonder and she watched the two men walking slowly through the moonlight, side by side. Indeed, all she could do was to watch and wonder.

She saw the third man hurrying after them with something under his arms, and he reached the wall at almost the same time as the other two. The three seemed to be talking and arguing over something for she could see them moving their arms and hands, and pointing this way and that. Then the third man left them and returned slowly to

the hotel. The others seemed to be watching him for when he had disappeared, the two separated and stood a little distance apart.

She saw them raise their arms and saw something glistening in the moonlight, and then there came two sharp reports almost as one. One of the men threw up his arms and staggered and fell on his face; the other remained motionless with his arm still out stretched. The terrible thing which had happened came to her mind all in an instant. She clutched the curtains of the window and fell on her knees still watching the figure standing motionless, and the moonlight glistening on the weapon outstretched in his hand.

Then slowly the arm fell, and the man seemed to give way. He sank little by little upon the stone wall and lay as the other. The girl's head fell upon the window sill and she thought many new thoughts and knew many things that she had never known before.

Off in the old town came floating again the sweet low notes of the guitar and the singing of the soft old Spanish song; and with it the lapping of the sea-waves around the old stone wall.

GEO. C. SHEDD.

Van Daub—What does the public know or care about art? If the Venus de Milo appeared on Broadway she'd be promptly arrested!

Twitterly—For having concealed arms I suppose?

Gilder—Your company stayed very late last evening.

Johnson—Yes, and they would have stayed longer if I hadn't asked my wife to sing.

Miss Firsttrip—Doctor, do you know any sure preventive of sea-sickness?

Dr. Pillbox—Yes; stay on land.

"A man likes a woman who shows him that she is clever."

"Oh, no; he likes a woman who shows him that he is clever."

Jones—He hasn't much religion, has he?

Brown—No; just enough to make him miserable.

A representative of one of the leading Detroit papers called on Miss Julia Arthur here last week, and, after mentioning the peculiar honor it was to his city, and the gratification they all felt that the American Bernhard had decided to open her tour there in "A Lady of Quality" on Oct. 4, asked:

"Would you mind telling us, Miss Arthur, just what reasons you have for opening in Detroit?"

"Well," replied the young actress, so recently from jokeless London, "you've got to begin somewhere, you know!"

McClure's Magazine for September will contain a new ballad by Kipling—a dramatic personification of English rule in Egypt. There will also be a humorous story by Robert Barr, reciting the discomfiture of a New York confidence man by a kindly but ingenious and resolute cowboy.

Col. George E. Waring, Jr., commissioner of street cleaning in New York, will contribute to McClure's Magazine for September an article showing that, by improvements in organization and method, a length of streets greater than the distance from New York to Chicago is now cleaned daily in New York without noise, confusion, or even dust, and at a constantly diminishing cost; and that thereby the expense of living and the liability to death have been greatly reduced, and the whole tone and character of the life of the city perceptibly elevated. Pictures of all the phases of street cleaning, from drawings and photographs, will illustrate the paper.

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