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**THANKSGIVING POETRY**

**HANKSGIVING!**  
'Tis Thanksgiving!  
To church with all the town!  
Let each give thanks for blessings  
The year has showered down.

Forgot that graves are gaping  
And soon shall swallow all—  
The thankful and the thankful,  
The mighty and the small.

Thanksgiving! 'Tis Thanksgiving!  
Let merry bells declare  
The joy that dwells within us,  
The exile of despair.  
Forgot that graves are gaping,  
That darkness stands beside  
To cover each man over  
And will not be denied.

Thanksgiving! 'Tis Thanksgiving!  
Let maid and matron sing;  
Let bass and tenor, choroid,  
Give thanks unto the King.  
Forgot that graves are gaping  
And endless silence soon  
Shall still be choir and organ  
And drown the joyful tune.

Thanksgiving! 'Tis Thanksgiving!  
Give thanks, then, oh, give thanks!  
This life has many prizes  
And few of us draw blanks.  
Forgot that graves are gaping,  
And that they who win shall rest  
Be the luckless losers  
In one oblivion drest.

Thanksgiving! 'Tis Thanksgiving!  
Fill full the flowing bowl!  
Back, care! But welcome, mirth!  
To-day to you is sacred,  
And all the men on earth  
Forgot that graves are gaping,  
That mirth with care shall be  
Together, undisturbed  
Throughout eternity.

Thanksgiving! 'Tis Thanksgiving!  
Give thanks, then, oh, give thanks!  
This life has many prizes  
And few of us draw blanks.  
Forgot that graves are gaping,  
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Throughout eternity.

16, whom nobody could look at without thinking of a rosebud almost blossoming. The only other person at the fireside was Robert Moore, formerly an apprentice of the blacksmith, but now his journeyman, and who seemed more like an own son of John Inglesfield than did the pale and slender student.

Only these four had kept New England's festival beneath that roof. The vacant chair at John Inglesfield's right hand was in memory of his wife, since she had snatched from him whom death had snatched from him since the previous Thanksgiving. With a feeling that few would have looked for in his rough nature the bearded husband had himself set the chair in its place next his own, and often did his eye glance thitherward as if he deemed it possible that the cold grave might send back its tenant to the cheerful fireside, at least for that one evening. Thus did he cherish the grief that was dear to him. But there was another grief which he would fain have torn from his heart; or, since that could never be, have buried it too deep for others to behold or for his own remembrance. Within the past year another member of his household had gone from him, but not to the grave. Yet they kept no vacant chair for her.

While John Inglesfield and his family were sitting around the hearth, with the shadows dancing behind them on the wall, the outer door was opened and a light footstep came along the passage. The latch of the inner door was lifted by some familiar hand, and a young girl came in, wearing a cloak and hood, which she took off and laid on the table beneath the looking-glass. Then after gazing a moment at the fireside circle, she approached and took the seat at John Inglesfield's right hand, as if he had been reserved on purpose for her.

"Here I am at last, father," said she. "You ate your Thanksgiving dinner without me, but I have come back to spend the evening with you."

Yes, it was Prudence Inglesfield. She wore the same neat and maidenly attire which she had been accustomed to put on when the household work was over for the day, and her hair was parted from her brow in the simple and modest fashion that became her best of all. If her cheek might otherwise have been pale, yet the glow of the fire suffused it with a healthful bloom. If she had spent the many months of her absence in guilt and infamy, yet they seemed to have left no traces on her gentle aspect. She could not have looked less altered had she merely stepped away from her father's fireside for half an hour and returned while the blaze was quivering upward from the same brands that were burning at her departure. And to John Inglesfield she was the very image of his buried wife, such as he remembered her on the first Thanksgiving which they had passed under their own roof. Therefore, though naturally a stern and rugged man, he could not speak unkindly to his sinful child, nor yet could he take her to his bosom.

"You are welcome home, Prudence," said he, glancing sideways at her, and his voice faltered. "Your mother would have rejoiced to see you, but she has been gone from us these four months."

"I know it, father, I know it," replied Prudence, quickly. "And yet when I first came in, my eyes were so dimmed by the brightness that she seemed to be sitting in this very chair."

By this time the other members of the family had begun to recover from their surprise and became sensible that it was no ghost from the grave nor vision, of their vivid recollections, but Prudence her own self. Her brother was the next that greeted

her. He advanced and held out his hand, yet not entirely like a brother, for with all his kindness, he was still a clergyman and speaking to a child of sin.

"Sister Prudence," said he earnestly, "I rejoice that a merciful Providence has turned your steps homeward in time for me to bid you a last farewell. In a few weeks, sister, I am to sail as a missionary to the far islands of the Pacific. There is not one of these beloved faces that I shall ever hope to behold again on this earth. Oh, may I see all of them—yours and all—before I gravely."

A shadow flitted across the girl's countenance.

"The grave is very dark, brother," answered she, withdrawing her hand somewhat hastily from his grasp. "You may look your last at me by the light of this fire."

While this was passing the twin-girl—the rosebud that had grown on the same stem with the castaway—stood gazing at her sister, longing to fling herself upon her bosom, so that the ten ris of their heart might intertwine again. At first she was restrained by mingled grief and shame, and by a dread that Prudence was too much changed to respond to her affection, or that her own purity would be felt as a reproach by the lost one. But, as she listened to the familiar voice, while the face grew more and more familiar, she forgot everything save that Prudence had come back. Springing forward, she would have clasped her in close embrace. At that very instant, however, Prudence started from her chair and held out both hands with a warning gesture.

"No, Mary; no, my sister," cried she; "do not touch me. Your bosom must not be pressed to mine."

Mary shuddered and stood still, for she felt that something darker than the grave was between Prudence and herself though they seemed so near. In other in the light of their father's hearth, where they had grown up together, meanwhile Prudence threw her eyes around the room in search of one who had not yet bidden her welcome. He had withdrawn from her seat by the fireside and was standing near the door with his face averted, so that his features could be discerned only by the flickering shadow of the profile upon the wall. But Prudence called to him in a cheerful and kindly tone:

"Come, Robert," said she, "won't you shake hands with your old friend?"

smiling sadly as she withdrew her hand, "you must not give me too warm a welcome."

And now, having exchanged greetings with each member of the family, Prudence again seated herself in the chair at John Inglesfield's right hand. She was naturally a girl of quick and tender sensibilities, gladness in her general mood, but with a bewitching pathos interwoven among her merriest words and deeds. It was remarked of her too, that she had a faculty, even in childhood, of throwing her own feelings like a spell over her companions such as she had been in the days of her innocence, so did she appear this evening. Her friends, in the surprise and bewilderment of her return, almost forgot that she had ever left them, or that she had forfeited any of her claims to their affection. In the morning, perhaps, they might have looked at her with a tired eye, but by the Thanksgiving fireside they felt on y that their own Prudence had come back to them and were thankful. John Inglesfield's rough visage brightened with the glow of his heart as it grew warm and merry within him. Once or twice he even laughed till the room rang again, yet seemed startled by the echo of his own mirth. The grave young minister became as frolicsome as a schoolboy. Mary, too, the rosebud, forgot that her twin blossom had ever been torn from the stem and trampled in the dust. And as for Robert Moore, he gazed at Prudence with the bashful earnestness of love new born, while she, with sweet maiden coquetry, half smiled upon and half discomfited him.

In short, it was one of those intervals when sorrow vanishes in its own depth of shadow and joy starts forth in transitory brightness. When the clock struck 8, Prudence poured out her father's customary draught of herb tea, which she had been steeping by the fireside ever since twilight.

"God bless you, child!" said John Inglesfield, as he took the cup from her hand; "you have made your old father happy again. But we miss your mother sadly, Prudence, sadly. It seems as if she ought to be here now."

"Now, father, or never," replied Prudence.

It was now the hour for domestic worship, but while the family were making preparations for their duty, they suddenly perceived that Prudence had put on her cloak and hood and was lifting the latch of the door.

"Prudence, Prudence, where are you going?" cried they all with one voice.

As Prudence passed out of the door she turned toward them and "lung back her hand with a gesture of farewell, but her face was so changed that they hardly recognized it. Sin and evil passions glowed through its comeliness and wrought a horrible deformity; a smile beamed in her eyes as a triumphant mockery at their surprise and grief.

"Daughter," cried John Inglesfield, between wrath and sorrow, "stay and be your father's blessing, or take his curse with you!"

For an instant Prudence lingered and looked back into the fire-lit room, while her countenance wore almost the expression as if she was struggling with a fiend, who had power to seize his victim even within the hallowed precincts of her father's hearth. The fiend prevailed and Prudence vanished into the outer darkness. When the family rushed to the door they could see nothing, but heard the sound of wheels rattling over the frozen ground.

That same night, among the painted beauties of the theater of a neighboring city, there was one whose dissolute mirth seemed inconsistent with any

FOR AN INSTANT PRUDENCE LINGERED, sympathy for pure affections, and for the joys and griefs which are hallowed by them. Yet this was Prudence Inglesfield. Her visit to the Thanksgiving fireside was the realization of one of those waking dream in which the guilty soul will some times stray back to its innocence. But sin, alas, is careful of her bond slaves; they hear her voice, perhaps at the holiest moment and are constrained to go whether she summons them. The same dark power that drew Prudence Inglesfield from her father's hearth—the same in its nature, though heightened then to a dread necessity—would snatch a guilty soul from the gate of heaven and make its sin and its punishment alike eternal.



**JOHN'S THANKSGIVING.**

BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

IN THE EVENING of Thanksgiving day John Inglesfield, the blacksmith, sat in his elbow chair among those who had been keeping festive at his board. Being the central figure of the domestic circle, the fire threw its strongest light on his massive and sturdy frame, rendering his rough visage so that it looked like the head of an iron statue, all a-glow from his own forge, and with its features rudely fashioned on his own anvil. At John Inglesfield's right hand was an empty chair. The other places round the hearth were filled by the members of the family, who all sat quietly while, with a semblance of fantastical mentriment, their shadows a-glow on the wall behind them. One of the group was John Inglesfield's son, who had been bred at college and was now a student of theology at Andover. There was also a daughter of

**"WON'T YOU SHAKE HANDS WITH AN OLD FRIEND?"**

Robert held back for a moment but affection struggled powerfully and overcame his pride and resentment. He reached forward, and clasped her hand and pressed it to his breast. "There, there, I thank," said he.