

POEMS UNWRITTEN.

There are poems unwritten, and songs un-sung. Sweeter than any that ever were heard— Poems that wait for an angel tongue. Songs that but long for a Paradise bird.

TRAGEDY OF EAGLE CLIFF.

BY HERO STRONG.

Before you have finished this story you will each and all agree that Bertha Stanhope was a fiend; but I tell you that at first she was not bad-hearted.

She had the misfortune to be born of wealthy parents, and that is a positive misfortune to a person of her peculiar temperament.

They did wrong with her all the way along.

They indulged her in everything, until by and by she thought the world was at her disposal, and if she had particularly desired the moon she would have been angry with it if it had declined to come at her bidding.

She grew up a beauty, and was admired, just as beauties have been ever since the creation.

Her style was a little peculiar, and this peculiarity added a charm to her beauty. She had a blonde face, with creamy white skin, and a color like a rose.

At eighteen Bertha was betrothed to Francis Tremaine.

It was more the work of the parents on both sides than of the young people themselves, for Bertha was too much taken up with her train of admirers to think much of marriage, and Tremaine himself was still at college, and wholly occupied in Greek roots and Latin terminations.

He knew the understanding, and acquiesced. His father and Bertha's had been close friends all their lives, and this union of the families by the marriage of their children had always been a cherished plan with them.

Indeed, it had been talked of so much in both homes that Bertha and Francis both looked upon the decree as unalterable, and never thought of disputing it.

She was fond of wealth and style, and as Frank Tremaine's wife she would be fully gratified in that respect. And Frank admired beauty, and had thought vaguely, as young men will, that when he married he wanted a lovely woman, and so it seemed that for once all parties were suited.

Two years after the betrothal Frank graduated, and began the study of law with Judge Brewster, at Amsgate. Amsgate was only two miles from Bertha's home, so he rode over to see his fair betrothed quite frequently.

And these visits brought about an important result. They won for Frank Tremaine Bertha's whole heart. It was not a noble or generous one, but such as were her capacities for loving, they were all lavished on him.

He came up exactly to her ideal hero. He was tall and dark, with curling brown hair and beard, deep, expressive eyes, and an air of conscious strength and integrity which gave a nobility to his bearing and a grace to his manner.

All Bertha's passionate though selfish nature awoke and went out to him. For her there was but one man in all the world, and Frank Tremaine was that one.

True, she laughed and flirted with her other lovers, but her heart was always turning after him.

Not in that way that he was affected toward her. As I said before, he admired her beauty, and supposed he should marry her, but he did not feel for her any more real affection than he felt for Susie Day, or Annie Deane, or half a dozen other girls.

Sometimes this consciousness troubled him, and he wondered if he really had any heart to be touched, but he comforted himself with the assurance that it would be all right when they were married. Of course he must not expect to be so deeply in love as the heroes of his favorite novels. People in real life never were.

A year after Frank Tremaine's graduation he was admitted to the bar, and the following autumn he was to be married to Bertha.

He was twenty-five now, and quite capable of forming opinions of his own. And by and by the consciousness began to creep over him that he was able to love better than he loved Bertha. He realized that she would never be to him all that a wife should be.

He was frequently tired in her presence, her talk bored him; he was on guard constantly lest he should arouse her fiery temper, and if he made the simplest assertion she was prone to argue the matter with him.

She loved truly nothing else in the world, unless an exception be made in favor of Teal, the great blood-hound that dogged her footsteps continually. She had brought him up from a mere pup, and though savage and dangerous with others, he was faithful and affectionate with her. He was intelligent, and seemed to understand perfectly any order given him by Bertha, and would obey it at once, no matter how unreasonable it might be.

In June Agnes Fane came to Stanhope Hall to visit Bertha. They had been school-friends, and were quite as devoted as girls usually are under such circumstances.

Have you seen one of those little inferior looking, brown-haired women, with greyish eyes, and no color worth mentioning, suddenly develop beneath favorable influences into a blossom beautiful as a royal lily, and rarely sweet as the fruit of the tropical banyan tree? Then you will understand how Agnes Fane developed.

Bertha had always thought her such a plain little thing, and would have laughed merrily had any one suggested the possibility that Frank Tremaine would ever cast a thought after her.

It must be admitted that at first Frank thought her rather uninteresting and decidedly plain, but by and by, under the influence of a glorious sunset—inspired and warmed by the gorgeousness of the gold and purple and azure—the plain face became absolutely brilliant, the great grayish eyes lighted up, and were like wells of thought and feeling, the pale cheek flushed and the delicate mouth wore a smile such as might not sit amiss on the lips of a saint.

Frank caught his breath quickly, and turned his face away. A sudden fear, swift and terrible, and gigantic, swept through his soul. What if not loving Bertha, he should marry her, and then love another?

That sudden revelation of character—of what a woman might be—was shown in the exalted countenance of Agnes Fane, gave him a clearer insight into his own heart.

He hurried away from the Hall, and did not go there again for several days. He could not exactly analyze his feelings, but he knew it was best he should keep away.

Then Bertha sent for him. She was an exacting girl, and liked to have him with her. Of course he came, and Agnes flushed slightly when he touched her hand. There was a subtle intelligence between them which told her that she had been in his thoughts, and made him delirious with the wild joy of daring to believe that she was not indifferent to him.

After that he gave himself up to the fascination of loving and winning her. Not that he ever thought of it in that way—for he would not think—but he was conscious of a new glory over all the world, and a new radiance in every glitter of light that swept down from the sunlit heaven above him. For it was always sunshine now.

And what of Agnes? Did she realize whether they were drifting? Not fully—but this other uncertainty was very sweet.

She had had so little happiness in her poor, starved, poverty-stricken life—and she did appreciate so fully all that Frank Tremaine was—and all that she might make him.

I do not know how, doubtless she was wrong; but every woman deems it her right to be loved. Heaven created them all with feelings which can never be satisfied without love—no woman ever yet was thoroughly at rest unless she was secure in loving and being loved. And shall Agnes be blamed for asking what was her right? I am sure I do not know.

Bertha went on, apparently unmoved, for she saw it all, and a fierce hatred of Agnes was born in her soul. She did not blame Frank—he was faithful until she came and fascinated him with her selfish eyes and her little bursts of enthusiasm over the things he loved.

So matters went on till the first of July, and Agnes was to remain at Stanhope until September.

Frank desired to be faithful, and knew that he could not continue so if he remained where he should see Agnes.

It was necessary that one of the firm to which he belonged should visit St. Paul on some business connected with an important suit which had been entrusted to their management, and Frank hailed this loop-hole of escape with delight.

If he could go away and stay until Agnes was gone it would be all right. So he made application for the journey, and his partners willingly agreed. Neither of them cared to incur the risk of fever and ague at that season of the year.

Frank said nothing of his intentions to Bertha. He knew she would oppose the scheme, and he intended to commit himself beyond hope of getting rid of it before he told her of his contemplated journey. And then he should represent the case as a very urgent and pressing one, involving no small amount of professional honor.

On Thursday he was to leave, and on the preceding Tuesday he called at Stanhope. It was getting on toward dusk, and Miss Fane had just lighted a candle to go upstairs. It was lonely down there in the parlor, she said. Bertha had gone shopping to Amsgate, and she was alone.

Frank was musing of the danger he incurred in remaining under the circumstances, but he was not strong enough to go away from temptation. This sensation of loving was something so new that it was delightful to them can go and yet not quite fall into it.

So Frank lingered. Agnes was now more charming than usual. She dressed always with good taste, but he had never seen her look so well in anything as she did in the soft black silk which let her arms and shoulders bare and white as pearls. And the half-blown damask rose in her dark hair was no more vivid than were her cheeks. Warmed to fever heat by the subtle sweetness of her presence, all those who have loved will understand the charm which kept Frank a prisoner beneath her smiles—for those who have never loved I am not writing.

She rose to get an engraving of which she had spoken to him from the table. She wore a gauze scarf, and inadvertently a corner of it was swayed by the motion of her arm into the blaze of the taper.

Frank's love magnified her danger. He sprang toward her with a low cry of horror, tore off the blazing scarf, and flung it on the floor. Her forehead, with its curls of hair as soft as floss silk, touched his lips. Before he knew what he was doing he was kissing the white forehead—kissing the sweet scarlet lips, and crying out from the depths of his heart:

"Oh, my darling! my darling! I love you!"

"She clung to him—she was sure of that, and Heaven knows how he would have gone on, but just then there was a step in the hall and Frank turned his head just in time to see Bertha Stanhope's azure dress streaking softly after her up the broad staircase. He felt sure that she had witnessed the whole scene; but he would not pain Agnes by telling her. He went away abruptly—he would call again, the next evening, he said at leaving.

"That night Bertha Stanhope did not sleep. All night long she sat in a chair by the window and thought. But in the morning she was down to breakfast—smiling and fresh as ever. Agnes thought she had never seen her eyes so bright and her cheeks so fine with color.

After the meal was over she asked Agnes to walk. It was such a splendid morning and, she said they should enjoy it immensely.

Agnes assented. Bertha chose the path. They would go down to eagle cliff—the great headland which overhung the sea just beyond the harbor.

Teal followed them—invited to do so by a gesture of him—mistress to do so by a gesture of her.

Agnes stood very near the edge of the precipice, and looked over, shuddering.

"What a fearful depth! It would be death to fall over there!" she said, drawing back, and glancing up for Bertha's answer she saw that the girl's face was livid, and that she was shaking like one in a fit.

Still her will was steady. "Teal," she said, concentrating her gaze on the dog, "this girl has wronged your mistress. Cast her over the cliff!" As she spoke she pointed downward, and the great beast understood her at once.

He sprang toward Agnes with greedy eyes, and seized her by the shoulder.

"Oh, mercy! mercy!" cried the poor little victim. "Bertha, for God's sake do not let him kill me!"

And still Bertha pointed downward, and added, in the same hoarse voice: "Teal, obey me!"

The dog renewed his hold, and dragged the helpless girl forward—and simultaneously the sharp report of a rifle rang through the air, and Teal leaped upward—his hot blood spurting in the face of Agnes. He uttered one wail, terrible in its dread pain and despair, and tumbled helplessly over the cliff.

"My God!" said Bertha, "I am lost!" Frank Tremaine parted the foliage close by, and rifle in hand emerged upon the scene.

"Do your worst!" Bertha said defiantly. He held his arms and looked at her, sorrow and pity on his countenance. Then he turned to Agnes. Love and despair, but love, beautiful and triumphant, over all.

Bertha saw and understood. She glanced up at the sky above, and down at the terrible abyss below. All fear and indecision went out of her face.

"Agnes," she said, "forgive me the wrong I meant to do. And thus make you recompense—you and him!"

One moment she stood on the verge of the precipice, the next she vanished from the sight of the two horrified beholders; and they did not dare look over.

Well, after the grass had grown green two years over Bertha Stanhope's grave Frank Tremaine and Agnes were married.

It has been a happy union, but I cannot help thinking that there is a shadow over their lives when they remember Bertha's tragic end.

MONKEYS AND TROCHES.

The Aspiring Simian Not to Be Outdone.

As I was lingering before the monkey cage in the Dresden Zoological Garden, a slight tickling in the throat, a chronic trouble with me, induced me to take out of my pocket a box of bronchial troches, and to put one of them in my mouth. Instantly a large monkey, of manifestly aspiring nature, thrust out his hairy arm and palm with a beseeching look that I would give him one. Why should he, too, not be allowed to enlarge his terrestrial experience and share the joys of the superior being before him? So I gave him a troche, which he at once clapped in his cheek. Scarcely did the bitter taste strike him than he snatched it out with his fingers and began rubbing it violently on the hair of his arm, as if to rub off the bad taste. Seeing, however, that the superior being continued to suck his troche serenely, he soon put his own back in his chops, to give a full trial. It proved too much for him to stand very long, and so out he pulled it a second time and began rubbing it on the sanded floor of the cage. Over and over the process was repeated; but each time as his reverential eye fell on the superior being outside, still peacefully sucking his own, a reflective expression came over his face which, as much as said, "Surely if that manifest god out there enjoys this nasty thing there must be some desirable quality in it that I am not developed enough to appreciate. So patiently the aspiring simian went on till he had dissolved the last particle of his troche."—Boston Herald.

Curious Story of a Picture.

There is a very curious story connected with one of the pictures in the famous collection at Wentworth Woodhouse, Lord Fitzwilliam's beautiful mansion. The picture is of a famous racehorse, named "Whistle-jacket," and the curious thing about it is that it has no back ground. When the picture of the horse was finished, someone suggested that a portrait of George the Fourth might be placed in the saddle, and a landscape added, but before this was done Whistle-jacket was brought to be compared with the picture, and to every-body's astonishment, attacked his counterfeit presentment so savagely that it was nearly destroyed. The incident was deemed so curious that the unfinished picture was hung as it was, sans background or King George, and so remains to this day.

A Tempting Bait.

Materfamilias: "Mr. Oboluet would make an excellent match for our Henriette, by what means could we get him to favor us with his company a little often, do you think?"

Elderly Son: "Oh! that's easy enough. I'll borrow 500 francs from him, then he'll not fail to call every day for the money."—Le Masque de Fer.

SPASMS OF LAUGHTER.

PRODUCTIONS OF PROFESSIONAL HUMORISTS.

Humorous Incidents, Witty Sayings and Fun of All Kinds—Read Them Before They Become Chestnuts.

His Poem did not Read Right.

An editor was sitting in his office one day when a man entered whose brow was clothed with thunder. Fiercely seizing a chair, he slung his umbrella on the floor and sat down.

"Are you the editor?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Can you read writing?"

"Of course."

"Read that," he said, thrusting at the editor an envelope with an inscription on it.

"B—," said the editor trying to spell it.

"That's not a 'B,' it's an 'S,'" said the man.

"'S' Oh, yes, I see. Well, it looks like 'Sal for Dinner,' or 'Souls of Sinners,'" said the editor.

"No, sir," replied the man; "nothing of the sort. That's my name. Samuel Bruner. I knew you couldn't read. I called to see about that poem of mine you printed the other day, entitled 'The Success of Sorrows.'"

"I don't remember it," said the editor.

"Of course you don't, because it went into the paper under the villainous title of 'Smearcase To-morrow.'"

"A blunder of the printer, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir; and that's what I want to see you about. The way in which that poem was mutilated was simply scandalous. I haven't slept a night since. It exposed me to derision. People think I am an ass. The editor coughed. Let me show you. The first line, when I wrote it, read this way: 'Lying by a weeping willow, underneath a gentle slope.' That is beautiful and poetic. Now, how, did your vile sheet represent it to the public? 'Lying to a weeping widow I induced her to elope.' Weeping widow mind you. A widow! Oh, thunder and lightning, that is too much! But look at the fourth verse. 'That's worse yet! Cast thy pearls before swine and lose them in the dirt.' He makes it to read this fashion: 'Cast thy pills before sunrise and lose them if they hurt.' Now isn't that a cold-blooded outrage on a man's feelings?"

"It's hard, very hard," said the editor.

"Then take the fifth verse. In the original manuscript it said, as plain as daylight: 'Take away the gilding money; it is only glittering dross.' In its printed form you made me say: 'Take away the tingling honey; put some flies in for the boss.' By George! I feel like attacking somebody with your froshovel! But, oh! look at the sixth verse. I wrote: 'I'm weary of the tossing of the ocean as it heaves.' When I opened your paper and saw the lines transformed into: 'I'm wearying out my trousers till they're open at the knees, I thought that was taking it an inch too far. I have a right to murder the compositor. Where is he?'

"He is out just now," said the editor.

"Come in tomorrow."

"I will," said the poet; "and I will come armed."—Yankee Blade.

The Man With a Bite.

A man sat on the end of a bench in Battery park with his left hand bandaged up, and I was about to ask him the cause when a man and his wife, who were sight-seeing and waiting for the boat on the Liberty route, stopped to question him.

"I was bitten on the hand by a dog," he replied to their query.

"Not a mad dog?" asked the woman.

"Yes, m. He was suffering with hydrophobia the worst way."

"By George!" exclaimed the husband, "regular mad dog, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"Henry, give him 10 cents," said the woman. "Here, I've got two nickels myself. How did the dog come to bite you?"

"It was in a park up town, ma'am. Some children were playing near where I sat, and the dog was making for them. I grabbed him and he bit me."

"Just jumped right out and grabbed him, eh?" asked the husband.

"Yes."

"And saved those innocent children?" added the wife. "Here's another nickel!"

"Was the dog frothing?" asked the husband.

"Very bad, sir."

"Eyes like balls of fire?"

"Yes."

"Well, here's 10 cents more. Did he get away after he bit you?"

"No, sir. I threw him down and choked him to death."

"By George! Hear that, Hanner? Here's another nickel. He'd make an ad-fried pucky constable, he would! Any danger of you're running mad?"

"I'm afraid there is, sir. This is the ninth day, and I felt like barking a few minutes ago."

"Did he? Hear that Hanner? Well, we'll have to be going. We want to catch that boat. If you should run mad while we are around here—"

"There'd be no danger to you, sir. I'd remember how kind you were to a suffering man."

They were rather hurried in their exit and they headed for the dock, and when they had gone I slid along up to the man and asked:

"In case you should run mad do you wish me to write the particulars to your poor old mother, or don't you wish her to know how you suffered and died?"

"I'd rather you'd spare her, sir, as he carefully closed his left optic and got up and wandered away to find an investment for his capital.—M. Quad in New York Evening World.

Didn't Come Around.

"See here, waiter," said a guest at a Western hotel in a new and struggling town, "haven't you got any milk for this coffee?"

"No, sir," replied the waiter affably, "the milkman didn't come around this morning."

"I don't see any bread."

"No, the bread man didn't come around."

"Can't you give me some iced tea?"

"Well, no, the fact is the ice man didn't come around."

"I don't see any meat on the table, nothing but fried catfish."

"No, catfish is the best we can do. The meat man didn't come around."

"Well, who in thunder did come around? There isn't enough to eat on this table to banquet a squirrel."

"There was a cabbage man around yesterday, and if you can wait I'll try and fix you up some cold slaw, or if it isn't all gone, there is some dried beef down in the cellar in a nail keg."—Texas Sittings.

Where Work is Pleasant.

Neglected Wife—"Why don't you go to work?"

Husband, a ne'er-do-well—"I ain't got no tools."

Neglected Wife—"Deacon Smith offered you five dollars to fix his fence, and you have a saw, and a plane, and a hammer, and nails. What more do you want?"

Husband—"I ain't got no file to sharpen it. Ole Smith can fix his fence himself."

Same Husband, ten years later—"Hist! Say, wife, I've escaped from the penitentiary. Gimme some other clothes, so I kin light out agin'."

Wife—"My, my! How did you get out?"

Husband—"I dug forty feet underground with a two-tined fork, and then cut my way through two feet of stone wall and ten inches of boiler iron with a saw made out of a tin dinner plate.—Good News.

A Friend's Opinion.

Hammerer—"I'll have to get a new piano. My old one is all worn out. The action is too uneven."

Hardhead—"The action! What's that?"

Hammerer—"I mean some of the keys go down too hard and some too easy. I became accustomed to it, and then when I play on a new piano in some one else's house I hit some keys too hard and others not hard enough. Understand?"

Hardhead—"I see."

Hammerer—"Well, the unexpected sounds startle me so that I forget the notes and get thrown out."

Hardhead—"They might tell you to stop, or hit you with a chair-leg, or something, but I don't think they ought to throw you out."—New York Weekly.

He Gave His Offering.

A Boston newspaper reports a rather amusing scene in an open horse car. The conductor had collected his fares and returned to his station upon the rear platform, when one of the passengers left his seat and took another nearer the front. The conductor was presumably on the lookout for passengers, and when his gaze reverted to the car, he saw, as he thought, a new man in one of the forward seats. He proceeded at once to collect the fare and tapped the gentleman courteously on the shoulder. "This is a one-cent piece," said the official. "Yes," answered the passenger, "I know it. I paid my fare when I was in the other seat. This time I supposed you were taking up a collection."—Philadelphia Ledger.

A Sad Accident.

Clara, just arriving at Narragansett,—"What kind of a time have you been having, Marie?"

Marie—"Oh, I should have had a perfectly lovely time if I had not met with an accident the very first evening I came."

Clara, surprised—"Why, Marie, I hadn't heard of it! What was it?"

Marie—"Harry proposed to me."

Clara—"You don't call that an accident, do you?"

Marie, hesitatingly—"No, not exactly, but I accepted him and he has been here ever since.—Truth.

A Fatal Profession.

"Well, Mr. Smythe, you've passed your examination very satisfactory, but stay—what is your profession?" asked the insurance company man.

"I am—er—er—a poet," said Smythe, blushing.

"Oh; and do you take or send your poems?"

"I usually call with them," said the rhymster.

"In that case, Mr. Smythe," said the official, shutting his book with a snap, "you surely shouldn't think of insuring your life! Good morning!"

At the Imperial Palace.

The Czarina—"Whatof worries you, my darlings?"

The Czar—"Enoughovitch. My pig of a Prime Minister has misled by bomb proof blazeroff, and I can't go to the ball gameovitch."

"But, sweetofsky, can't you find some other diversionovitch?"

"Yes, light of my heartsoff. I shall order a hundred offenders to the Siberian minesky."—Pittsburg Bulletin.

Safer Than any Safe.

Wishlets—"These summer resorts are so full of all kinds of crooks, that, for fear of being robbed, I always leave my money in the hotel safe."

Bishlets—"I have a much better plan."

"What is it?"

"My wife carries the huddle in her dress pocket.—Brooklyn Eagle.

A Mean Man.

White—"That man Brown is telling all sorts of scandalous stories about me."

Green—"Oh, I wouldn't mind about that, White. No one will believe them, you know."

"Yes, but confound him, most of the things he tells are true."—Somerville Journal.

The Choice of Evils.

He—"We shall never be able to get back to the hotel before nightfall."

She—"Dear me, how improper it will be!"

"There is only one way out of it, and that is for us to be engaged."

"Well, I think I prefer to lose my reputation.—New York Herald.

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