

BETROTHED

The early joy of a young man and maid,
Who stand upon the threshold of life's
morn
Hand linked in hand, while all for them
is fair
With rosy promise of a day to be;
Who know how each to each is all in all.

So each to each is of the other sure,
Come weal or woe, the sunshine or the
rain,
This thing is good. For even tho' it be
That the full promise of dawn is un-
fulfilled,
And winds arise the landscape fair to mar
By mists and shadows no man may fore-
see.
The perfect vision of the opening day
Remains for them a blessed memory
Thro' all the day, until all light is gone.

Closed by the last chime of the curfew.
Yet
To have known that glory of dawn still
makes the day
More beautiful than tho' it had not been.
Most happy they for whom this time shall
prove
The first sweet moments of an ample
day!
To those for whom, until the morning
came,
Life had been but a twilight-time where-
in
Each had moved solitary amid the crowd,
Lonely in spirit, lonely in heart and
mind,
The coming of this dawn makes all
things new.

For them the world is as another world;
They are themselves, yet not their for-
mer selves,
And half-forgotten of all former hours,
With Love arisen they live alone no
more.

—C. M. Paine.



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When the wind came there was a rain of maple leaves, weary and withered souls swept from the grayed branches, falling to swift currents near the ground where they swirled in yellow hosts, raising upon the air a long sound of crackling cries, a curious interminable noise of dismay at death, of fear of this implacable sweeping force that came from the red western sky which flared like an army with lurid banners.

A girl came slowly down the path that led through the maples. She walked in a dreamy way, following unconsciously the mere indication of a road, that summer path that had



Looming Above a Rim of Treetops, been swallowed in the merciless hall of the dead leaves. Finally, a man stepped from the shadows. He was smiling as he put forth his hand.

"Hello," he said.

When their hands clasped, she began to look at the dark distance of the landscape, turning her face from him.

"Well," he said at last, studying the immobile face, still holding her hand, "are you glad to see me? I just returned yesterday on the New York. Very breezy trip. I thought I had

better—" then suddenly he threw away all that and spoke quickly: "And your husband?"

She made a gesture towards where three brick chimneys appeared in the distance, looming above a rim of tree tops. They both steadily regarded these as if they were three personages, three facts, emblematic exactly of a certain situation. He, with his cigarette now in his mouth, his hat still tilted, clasping his hands, said: "The infernal idiot!"

She looked at him with a swift, resentful glance, but he answered at once, making a gesture of irritation which was a sort of defiant outburst. "Oh, I am tired of treating him with magnificent respect, when, as a matter of truth, he is to me the most stupid and dense beast in the universe for not being dead."

She was lifting her chin in a battleful way and waving her fingers toward his mouth. "But he is my—"

"The devil," interrupted the young man, violently. "Do you think that I am not aware of it?" He glared at her with sullen rage.

Upon her face as she looked at him there was a vague, indescribable smile and in her eyes there were two faint points of mellow light. "Yes, you do know it," she said.

He answered her attitude, the light in her eyes. "You love me," he cried in discontented muttering, "and yet you spend all your time in guarding the peace of that duffer"—indicating the three red chimneys with a contemptuous wave of his hand—"as if he were a sacred white elephant of Siam; and, as for me, I am to be held off with spears for fear I might kiss the tip of your little finger. And yet you love me. You are incomprehensible. I could kill him. And yet—you—why won't you run away with me?"

When she replied her voice had a subtle quality of monotony in it as if she were speaking a lesson, uttering some sentiment in which she had resolutely schooled herself. "Ah, the sin. You would never be happy with a bad woman."

It seemed to make him furious. He gazed at her blackly. "A bad woman! What rot! You—"

Then she suddenly acknowledged the falsity of her speech. "No—no—no, I

didn't mean that, I didn't mean it, I meant that I—I could never be happy if I were a bad woman. I would be afraid"—she raised her finger and pointed it mournfully at him—"I would be afraid of you."

He laughed savagely. "You are as wise as seven owls. It cannot be argued. It is to be demonstrated. A renewal of my protestations of love would not be convincing." He burst out passionately, as if he could no longer endure the weight of his hopes, his fears, his wrongs. "But why not make an attempt for happiness? You love me. I love you. What is there in this infernal environment that should make us value it? What is there to suffice us if we have not each other. Nothing, I tell you, nothing."

"Wait," she said. "God forgive us—it cannot be long to wait now."

"Wait, wait. My soul is weary of this waiting," he answered. "He will never die; he is too selfish; he will see us both in our graves, I tell you. Is all our youth to be worn threadbare waiting for this selfish brute to shuffle off?" He looked at her steadily for a moment, then continued: "Do you know that I believe that in spite of the life he has led you, you love him, now, more than you do me."

She was very white and the pain in her eyes should have warned him.

"No," he said, "four years is long enough to wait; long enough for you to make up your mind. Do you know that you have played fast and loose with me for four years? Four—long—years? Now you must decide. Will you come with me, dear heart, will you come with me? Say—speak—will you come to the shelter of my love or do you send me away forever? I will wait no longer; I am determined; choose—him—" and he shook his closed hands at the red chimneys—"or happiness with me!"

The girl shivered and drew her cape closely about her shoulders. As she moved a faint perfume of lavender came to the man. He took hold of both her hands with his and drew her to him, eagerly, gazing at her face, so close to his own, noting every feature, the small straight nose, the forehead low and broad, crowned with masses of dark waving hair, the small rounded chin beneath the sweet trembling mouth! And her eyes—her eyes, now dark with the pain of this passion which she felt was mastering her.



One Long Kiss.

She could feel his warm breath upon her cheeks. Her hands crept up his arms and about his neck; she threw her head back and as she did—their lips met in one long kiss.

The following morning the man awakened with a song upon the lips that she had kissed. As he dressed he strutted as a self-satisfied cock might strut while he plumed himself in the barnyard. They were to leave that night. Of course nothing could prevent her going, now—"nothing but death," she had said. All the morning he was busy arranging his affairs for a long absence.

At noon came a messenger with a note. It was from her. How well he knew the gray paper and the dainty

writing! He caressed the envelope before he opened it. "Why, I am getting as sentimental as a woman," he said aloud, laughingly. Then he tore the note open and this is what it said:

"Forgive, forgive me, my beloved. I have chosen death. I could not leave him and after yesterday there is no peace for me but in death. Forgive me, for I have loved you more than life."

The woman killed herself on October the 9th. Her husband died of a long, lingering illness on October 10th.

Under the maples the man walked and the little leaves of brown and yellow and those with the crimson blots danced about him. The man had grown old in two days, frost had touched his temples and his face was gray and drawn. He looked at the red chimneys above the tree tops; he held out his arms towards them, yearningly, with a half-stifled moan. The little leaves danced and flew in clouds before his eyes, they beat him upon the face; they seemed to run and jump before his sight, blinding him, stinging him, as he held his arms towards the red chimneys.

WIFE WAS JUSTLY INDIGNANT.

Husband's Failure to "Bawl" at Her Demise Was Too Much.

Mrs. Letitia Tyler Semple, who was mistress of the White House during President Tyler's administration, has just celebrated in Washington her eighty-third birthday.

"The statesman I liked best in my youth was Daniel Webster," Mrs. Semple said the other day. "He was a handsome man and talked well. I remember a banquet one night when the subject of death and dying came up, and Mr. Webster told us a story that was half funny and half pathetic.

"He said that an old woman lay very ill and after a time she went off into a trance. She lay so still in this trance that they thought the end had come, and when she opened her eyes again at last her husband said to her in a surprised tone:

"Why, Mandy, we thought ye wuz dead."

"The poor woman looked at her husband a moment and then she burst into tears.

"An' ye never bawled a bit," she sobbed. "Ye thought I wuz dead and yer eyes wuz dry. Couldn't ye have bawled a little bit, Jabez?"

"The old man was deeply moved, and he did actually bawl then. But his wife said sadly:

"It's too late now. Dry yer eyes. If I'd really been dead and ye'd bawled 'twould have done me some good. But it's too late now."

Maranda.

A crescent moon lingers to greet the morn,
The star of beauty smiling in its rays;
The birds sing low—as wooing their own
lays:
The young May-blossoms freshened
zephyrs warn,
Lest closer touching win, not bud, but
thorn;
The air breathes lover's breath on
fainting haze;
With Silence, eloquent with voiceless
praise,
Guards well the stillness—and the day is
born.

The poet's soul saw type of this fair
hour
In sacred recess of a living heart;
Its peerless melody, its bloom, its flower,
its beauty, and its mystery are part
Of hymnic music, telling of sunrise
In the soft shadows of a maiden's eyes.
—Mary M. Adams, from "The Song at
Midnight."

Church Pews as Investments.

At Kirkham (Eng.) Parish church the greater portion of the pew rents, instead of swelling the exchequer of the church, go into the pockets of private individuals, who, for the most part, do not attend the church or even reside in the district. The peculiar situation originated in 1823, when, to meet the expenses of rebuilding the church, about forty pews and a few organ seats were put up for auction and realized amounts varying from \$175 to \$500. The church wardens are endeavoring to come to an arrangement with the pew owners with a view to securing a larger share of the rents for the benefit of the church.