

My Own Four Walls.

The storm and night is on the waste,  
Wild through the wind the herdsman  
calls.  
As fast on willing nag I haste  
Home to my own four walls.

Black, tossing clouds, with scarce a glim-  
mer,  
Envelop earth like sevenfold palls;  
But wifekin watches, coffee-pot doth sim-  
mer.

Home in my own four walls,  
A home and wife, I, too, have got,  
A hearth to blaze, whate'er befalls;  
What needs a man that I have not  
Within my own four walls?

King George has palaces of pride,  
And armed grooms must ward those  
halls;  
With one stout bolt I safe abide  
Within my own four walls.

Not all his men may sever this;  
It yields to friends' and monarchs' calls;  
My whinstone house my castle is,—  
I have my own four walls.

When fools or knaves do make a rout  
With gismen, dinners, balls, cabals,  
I turn my back and shut them out,—  
I have my own four walls.

The moorland house, though rude it be,  
May stand the brunt when prouder  
falls;  
'Twill screen my wife, my books, and me,  
All in my own four walls.  
—Thomas Carlyle.

A TRAGEDY AVERTED

By CORDIA GREER PETRIE  
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The path which penetrated the mountain fastness was steep and perilous and flanked by a dense undergrowth. Far below—like an exquisite picture in miniature—lay the valley, through which the river wound its sinuous way like a silver thread on a bed of emerald.

A little woman in a smart white linen gown pressed her way onward and upward—pausing ever and anon to gaze with manifest interest upon the marvelous scenery.

At the summit of the mountain was a hut—a typical mountain home, rudely constructed of poles of miscellaneous sizes and lengths, with a badly warped roof and a dilapidated stick and mud chimney. At the approach of the woman, two lank, hungry looking hounds bounded out and resented her encroachment with a series of formidable barks. Terrified, the woman struck at them with her chignon parasol, which served to infuriate the beasts the more. At this moment



"Yer ain't used to climbing."

there appeared in the cabin doorway a large, masculine woman, unkempt, ragged and barefooted. Removing the pipe from her mouth, she yelled:

"Be gone, Kinley! You, Yerks! Git under the house yer onery curs! A body can't sot foot on the place 'thout you-uns air plum ready to take 'em!" The dogs slunk away and the visitor came nearer.

"Yer ain't used to climbing," she queried as she noted the weary, tired expression of the woman before her. She was such a frail, tender little thing, this visitor, almost doll-like in her refined loveliness, and beside the coarse featured woman of the mountain she seemed a bit of fine Dresden. A spot of vivid crimson burned her

cheeks and her eyes shone with the bright, glassy sparkle characteristic of the consumptive.

"I have been very ill for six weeks, and during all that time I watched your little house from my window at the hotel and in lieu of other diversion I found myself weaving all sorts of dream pictures about it. Somehow, I formed an attachment for the place, and resolved that so soon as my strength permitted I'd pay it my respects. My husband is most solicitous and guards me as carefully as a mother does her child. Business called him to town to-day and—well, you know the old adage, 'when the cat's away.' I am afraid, however, I shall pay dearly for my outing as I'm tired to exhaustion."

The mountaineer rose hastily. "Let me fix you a dram," she said, politely. "I've got a full pint that hain't never been teched, and it's fine, too! Nothin' is more peartenin' than a little liker!" Her guest smilingly declined the generous offer, and the hostess went on:

"Yer orter take it regular—yer so puny looking and yaller! Ef yer'd stay out here in the mountings and take off them tight fixings, yer'd soon git stout like me."

"O, do you think so?" the visitor interposed. "My husband thoroughly dislikes the country—the mountains being his pet aversion—but he'd gladly sacrifice business, society, everything to have my health restored. The thought of having to leave John, of the probability of another being enshrined in his heart is unspeakably maddening! I can't bear it!"

She covered her face with her small, jeweled hands and wept softly. The mountaineer went over and laid a rough hand on the golden hair.

"Thar now," she said, gently. "Don't take on so, becase that won't he'p it none. 'Ef wishes wuz hay stacks we'd all have plenty of feed fur our nags this winter.' Fur that matter, you may outlive all of us yit. 'Tain't the puniest that dies fust—that's a sot fact!"

The mountaineer resumed her seat by the fireplace and relighted her pipe in silence.

"Honey," she said, after puffing at the pipe till it was "drawing" satisfactorily, "yer don't know what trouble is. Death is bad, I'll allow, but thar's things a sight wuss!"

Her guest looked up inquiringly.

"Is it possible that trouble penetrates even here?" she asked.

"Lord, child! I hain't never knowd nothing else! was the answer. "You-uns who live in cities and dress in yer silks and satins hain't no idy how us mounting folks has to shift to keep soul and body together. It's work, work, from sun up to sun down, from 'arly morning till late at night, and then we never have nothing but air injinerally in debt. We wimmen not only does the cooking, washing, orning, and raise regular herds of children, but we're expected to gether brash fur fire wood, cut sprouts, and work in the fields between times. No wonder we git old afore our times and go all hunkered over and don't look like nothing when we do try to fix up—which ain't often, the Lord knows! I never got no schooling, fur I wuz sent to the fields afore I wuz hardly big enough to tote a hoe, and thar I stayed till I wuz fourteen, when I run off and married. It 'uz like jumping from the frying pan into the fire, fur my man wuz puny and afore I wuz eighteen he giv plum down and I had to make the living fur him and our little gal."

She sat for some moments in deep abstraction.

"It wuz hard, but somehow I managed to keep our heads above water, and when Losy growed up, everybody 'lowed she wuz the purtiest gal in Knox county. Eyes as blue as beads, skin as white and soft as a baby's, and hair as yaller as them merrygolds out yander. I needed her at home to help me, and only sent her to two schools, but it wuz a sight to the world how the child larnt! I kin see her now, settin' by her pap's bed readin' the scriptur to him—all erbout

Norer and the ark and Joner swallerin' the whale!"

Again she paused. Her eyes had become tender as a child's.

"When she had turned into her fourteenth year," she finally resumed, "thar come along one day a stranger. He looked like them men down thar at the hotel in his dressing, wuz good looking, well mannered and had a voice like a woman's. And how he did dress! His pockets jest bulged with money. He wuz a artist, and nothing would do but he must paint Losy's pictur. He 'lowed ef he could paint a face like hern his reppytation would be made. My old man wuz bed rid with drapsy of the heart; the last payment on the place wuz nearly due; I needed the money, and so I tuck him to board. When I giv in fur Losy to set fer the pictur he laid



Rooted to the spot.

a bran' new fifty dollar bill in my hand. I felt like drappin' on my knees and thanking him. God! Ef I could have seed his black heart, I'd a sunk a knife through and through it afore placing my little gal in sich danger!"

Again she paused and the visitor broke in:

"Pray go on with the story. I'm particularly interested in artists, for my husband belongs in that category—ah! such an one as he is! Two continents delight to do him honor!"

The mountaineer appeared not to hear, but continued her narrative as if talking to herself:

"The night after him and Losy run away my man died—calling for our little gal with his last breath—and then I wuz left in the old home alone."

"And Losy—your daughter—what became of her?"

"Mighty nigh a year passed and no word come, though something 'peared to tell me she'd come back. On a Christmas Eve, I wuz settin' afore the fireplace, thinking of the happy days that wuz gone from me forever. All at once I sensed that some one wuz at the winder looking in at me. I turned and seed her, my little gal, but O, so pore, so pitiful and sorrowful! With a cry of joy I flew to the door, throwed it open, and ketched her to my breast jest as her little body fell fainting in her maminie's arms! Pore little gal! Pore little Losy! She went away a child, and come back a broken-hearted woman! I brung her in and somehow got her to bed, and soon's I could leave her I called to Bob Strunk to go fetch a doctor quick. . . . We worked with her all night, but 'twarn't no use! I'd found her jest to lose her agin! Jest as the sun come up over Indian mountain she breathed her last—died in my arms—thank God fur that! No word passed her lips but thar wuz a look on her face that makes me know my little gal is at rest."

Tears coursed unrestrainedly down the furrowed cheeks, but no sound escaped the firm, set lips. The little woman in white glided forward and threw her arms impulsively around the elder woman's neck.

"Poor dear!" said she in a voice full of sympathy. "How you have suffer-

ed. You were quite right. I have not as yet learned the meaning of the word 'sorrow.'"

There were tears in her eyes as she stood stroking the woman's coarse hair.

"I buried her by her pap under the big chestnut tree on the hill. The old place never 'peared the same after that. Somehow I couldn't content myself no more, fur everything put me in mind of her so, the flowers she'd planted, her books and the old tree whar she used to swing. I felt like I'd shorely go deranged lessen I went way off summers, so I sold the place and cut out. . . . They air sleeping side by side way over on yan side of that range of mountings—full fifty mile from here. It's been ten year ago, and all that time I've watched and waited! I brung jest two things away from the old home—my old man's shotgun and the partly finished pictur of Losy. The pictur is mine, it's all I've got left of my little gal, but the load in that 'ar gun is fur him—the devil that wrecked my home—and as shore as God sets on the throne, I'll send him to Kingdom come ef he ever crosses my path! The blood of my man and Losy cries out fur vengeance."

The visitor shuddered as her eyes inadvertently sought the rack in which the gun rested.

"And the picture," she said with a rising inflection.

The mountaineer woman walked to the wall opposite and drew back a flowered calico curtain.

A cry of admiration came from the visitor's lips as she went over and critically inspected the half finished canvas. Truly the woman had spoken the truth, the face depicted was beautiful as an angel's, incomparably lovely—a veritable Madonna—a face to dream about.

"Wrought by a master's hand," the visitor mused as she continued to feast on its loveliness.

A shadow fell across the threshold, but the woman standing before the unfinished canvas failed to note it. Not so the rough woman of the mountain. She caught her breath hard and fast as she looked up and beheld the intruder—a tall, handsome man of distinguished appearance. There was a smile on his lips, but it faded quickly away when his eyes met those of the mountaineer. His color fled and his face became suddenly aged and worn. The woman of the hut stood for a second transfixed. Her eyes changed from an expression of surprise to a metallic, dangerous glitter. Her face now hard and steely broke into almost a smile as she turned and reached for the gun above her head. The man's knees smote together, he stood rooted to the spot. He heard the clicking of the weapon as the intrepid woman before him cocked it—and then—

The woman before the canvas turned suddenly, and seeing him, came forward with a smile upon her face and her little hands outstretched.

"O, John!" she said, merrily, "I thought you were gone for the day, and ran away. It has been such fun, so please don't scold, for I feel better, really." Turning to her hostess she explained:

"I want you to meet my husband."

The rugged woman of the mountains stood irresolute. Her fingers eagerly sought the trigger, but the pale face of the wife deterred her. There was a moment of indecision, of wavering, and then she resolutely turned and placed the gun back in the rack.

The man in the doorway fainted.

Alarmed at His "Load."

Walter Camp, the Yale football coach, tells the story of a young Yale student who came to New York to witness a football game, and who celebrated the victory of his team by visits to many cafes. He accompanied some friends to a theater in the evening, where the performance was in pantomime. At the conclusion of the performance he exclaimed: "I'm drunker than I thought I was. I haven't been able to understand a single word of the whole play."—New York Times.