

POETRY OF THE TIMES.

I Want to be an Ingen.

I want to be an Ingen.
And with the Ingen stand,
A blanket on my shoulders,

Hiawatha Re-Vamped.

As unto the low the cord is
So was sent unto Roscoe,
Thought it bent him, it bowed him;

Too Thick.

Short, golden curls a tangled mass—
Cling close to her snowy breast;
His manly form he bent her head;

MY CONFESSION.

It was doubtless a terrible calamity.
I tried to reason with my husband,
And persuade him that, after all,
It was what might be expected.

"That's the word," he interrupted,
fiercely. "You needn't say any more.
That covers everything. Tramp!
That's what I have come to at last."

I had been looking at it ever since
he put it on the fender. It was
terribly broken, to be sure. It was
like the one-hoss shay, and had given out
all over at once.

So had Charley. All his patience,
perseverance, and persistency had
cooled out at that awful hole. "A
man can stand anything but that,"

"You mean, selfish wretch!" I cried,
flinging my arms about him. "What
would become of me and the children?"

"Your people would take care of
you and the youngsters, Kate. I'm
only a dog and a curse to you, my
dear. Your people would be glad to
be rid of me."

"Oh, Charley!" I cried.
"But that dreadful day
Charley kissed as all as usual when
he went out. He seemed to be calm
and more resigned. But I remem-
bered the ghastliness of his smile
when he drew a rubber over his boot."

"You'll send for us when you get
cooled down," they said. "And doubt-
less I should have gone, and comforted
himself that had never agreed with
mine in the days of my prosperity,
but it was a kind of bitter tonic to me
just then."

you get the right side of him, in as
easy as an old shoe. The funeral'll
come off to-morrow. Her children'll
be divided round among the
relatives, I'll go home now, and talk
with Mr. Chandler, and you come
round to-night and settle everything. There's
nothing like strikin' when the iron's
hot. It don't do to let the grass grow
under your feet. That was the trouble
with Charley; he was too slow; had
trouble with him—leastways that's what
the folks say."

"Slanderers! backbiters! falsifiers!
My Charley was the best, the dearest!"

"Yes, yes, no doubt; but he ain't
here just now to earn a livin' for you
and the children, and you don't want
to sponge on your folks."

"Well, the ways of Providence is
incurable. It seems to be appointed
that you should take that house, Mrs.
Rogers dyin' that way, just in the
nick of time, and your bevin' a row
with the folks—it's wonderful! I'll go
home right away, and have a talk with
Mr. Chandler before he falls in with
somebody else; he'll let you hev the
furniture on installments, I know, any-
way. But I'll go home and see about
it, and you come around to-night, if
you hear, Kate?"

"Yes, ma'am," I said, and gulped
down a sigh that was almost a groan
as she disappeared. The consolation
had all gone out of her presence long
ago. I suppose I ought to have been
grateful. My need was desperate,
but Aunt Maria made the proposal
so repelling the poor dead woman,
the division of her children, the
mortgage on her furniture; I couldn't
even see much comfort in the kitchen
oil-cloth sticking to the floor. I
looked upon my children as they
trooped in, shabby but rosy, from
their winter sport, and wondered how
they would fare among my hard-
hearted relatives when my turn came
to die, and theirs to be disbanded.
Charley and I had always said we'd
rather die than board or keep board-
ers. Charley had died, possibly; but
the children and I were left, and
something had to be done. It seemed
as though Mr. Chandler was my only
hope; but I went around there with a
heavy heart and nearly tumbled off
the stoop when I saw a flutter of crape
on the bell handle. I never in the
world could have gained courage to
pull it. Fortunately a young man
came out. I slipped in, and he
slammed the door after him, and went
whistling his way down the street.
I crept by the parlor floor, where
some people stood in groups, talking
and laughing quite unconcernedly in
the awful presence of death itself.
The dishes were clattering on the
dumb-waiter; a woman came down the
stairs, smiling and happy, and clothed
and hooded for the opera. She carried a
huge bouquet in her hand, and I
wondered how she could pass the par-
lor door. The people in the house
may say what they please about my
coolness and assurance, but I should
be very sorry to have as little heart as
they. Aunt Maria was already bag-
geling about the kitchen oil-cloth, and
nothing would do but we must all go
down and see that it really did stick to
the floor.

Mr. Chandler was a short stout
man, with scarcely any hair on his
head, and a short little nose that he
had to keep perched in the air so his
spectacles wouldn't fall off. His
eyes were very round, and his cheeks
were like a pair of red apples. He
beard gave him somehow a very be-
nevoleant air that was calculated to in-
spire confidence. We descended into
what seemed to me the very bowels
of the earth, and as we entered the big
cavernous gloomy kitchen, there was a
scamp that betokened rats, and an
army of Grotto-bugs fled at our ap-
proach. I was weak and nervous,
and uttering an exclamation of terror,
clung to Mr. Chandler's arm.

"God bless my soul!" said Mr.
Chandler, starting back. "Oh, it's
you! Don't be at all frightened. I'll take
care of you."

He had himself been considerably
shaken by the size and quantity of this
subterranean army, and it was evi-
dently a great relief to him to find
somebody else as nervous as himself.
He took the hand with which I
had grasped his arm and held it in
his own, assuring me that he would
protect me. Nevertheless, I was glad
when he was so easily persuaded that
the kitchen oil-cloth would really stick
to the floor, for although I was very
favorably impressed with Mr. Chan-
dler as to domestic confidences, he was
not the champion I would choose in a
combat with rats and Grotto-bugs.

Aunt Maria seemed more to the pur-
pose. She gathered up her skirts from
the first, and seemed prepared either
for battle or for flight, and was the
last one to mount the lower stair. Mr.
Chandler protected me all the way to
Aunt Maria's door, and bade me good-
night, with the hope that all was ar-
ranged satisfactorily.

"It's just as well," she continued,
"for I told him you were a widow—
there's no use enterin' into particulars
about Charley."

"It's nobody's business about Char-
ley."

to help the widow and the father-
less. I felt as if I must tell him all
about Charley and the boys; but the
adversary restrained under which I
labored restrained me. I had been
compelled to ask him for an advance;
there was a great deal of expense at
first, and I was such a novice at every-
thing. I felt compelled to avail my-
self of all the sympathy possible; but
I was confident that after the first
three months were over I could get
along without Mr. Chandler's help,
and then, no matter what Aunt Maria
said, I determined to tell him every-
thing. He was entitled to my confi-
dence, and I only awaited a favorable
opportunity to give existence to Char-
ley and the three boys. Everything
went along like clock-work for a while.
If I had only put my whole mind to
it, I might have mastered everything
before the cold weather set in.

And I wouldn't have fallen behind
so lamentably in my accounts if I had
been very careful, and severely
watched the scraps and crumbs that
fell from the boarding-house table. I
was perhaps too good to the tramp-
and beggars, and fed too many of the
wanderers that came to the basement
door.

In vain Aunt Maria scolded, and
vowed she never came down to press
her crimps but she staided over for a
tramp. In vain Mr. Chandler mildly
remonstrated upon the loss of two
overcoats and a set of razors. They
know nothing of the way I felt, or how
my heart beat as I waited for the
light I saw a big, broad-shouldered,
sandy-haired fellow standing there,
with broken boots. It took me a good
while to grow calm and collected, and
in the mean while he had eaten a good
many slices of bread and meat, and
perhaps stolen something from the hat
rack in the lower hall.

In truth, it was impossible to per-
suade me that Charley was dead. I
felt that some time he would come
to me:

"For Love will dream and Faith will trust
(Since He who knows our need is just)
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must."

And it was the most natural thing
in the world to look for him as a tramp.
That last sad morning was photograph-
ed on my memory when he stood be-
fore me so painfully shabby, and with
such broken boots. I couldn't give
him up. I was chilled and numb, but
Mr. Chandler, with his usual respect-
ability, his funeral-broadcloth, and his
high hat, his ever-ready money, and
his never-ending remonstrance
and advice. I did so long for dear
old impetuous Charley, and

"after long grief and pain,
To feel the arms of my true love
Round me once again."

What wonder, with a mind so un-
settled, and a heart so open to vagan-
dancies, that I was cheated and robbed
and driven to the wall, and the second
month came so appallingly soon that I
had to get another advance from Mr.
Chandler.

It was the most astonishing thing
in the world that, although I never had
an easy moment in that dreadful
house, never did time fly so quickly.
The third month was upon me before
I could realize it, and it was a matter
of glad surprise to me that I had not
before me the awful necessity of any
other advance from Mr. Chandler. I
was not, perhaps, any better off so far
as actual money was concerned, but I
was longer established, and able to get
credit outside. I always endeavored
to treat the trades-people with every
possible consideration, and they were
very kind to me—very.

Everybody knows what an awful
winter it was. I was chilled and numb,
and experience with water-pipes. On
the first of the month a cold wave started
direct from the north pole, and came
with incredible velocity, as the bird
flies, straight to that doomed board-
ing-house. It froze the water-pipes
all over the house, soddened the
bread, petrified the clothes on the
line, paralyzed the potatoes, also
apples, turnips, cabbages, and every-
thing else that I had in the kitchen
in quantity for economy's sake.

The sun went down on that day's
wrath. Three days after, it rose on
another, and if the end of the world
had come with it, I should have been
only too glad. Gabriel's trumpet
would have been a welcome sound to
me than the step of Mr. Chandler that
I heard approaching my door. I
knew he had been waiting all over the
house for me, and I had fled from
room to room, from stair to stair, till
at last I had taken refuge in the
garret floor, which the children, the
servants, and I shared together.

The awful fact was that the man's
house was ruined. The weather was
dreadfully against me. Even the oldest
inhabitant of the boarding house
declared that he had never known
at sudden and remarkable changes.
Without a word of warning, like a
thief in the night, the calamity came.
The pipes threw off their icy letters,
and burst. The deluge was nothing
to it.

Before anything could be done, sev-
en different ceilings were frescoed and
tattooed in a most unhappy manner,
seven different carpets were drenched,
and the occupants of seven different
rooms were hunting for holes to
sent for the calcimines, the plumbers,
and the carpet men, and found out how
much it would cost to put Mr. Chan-
dler's house in order again. Then I
fled to my room.

I threw myself on the bed, and
stared at the ceiling like a maniac.
There was nothing the matter with
that ceiling; for the demonic pipes
stopped on the floor below.

The stoniness of my gaze was occa-
sioned by the climax of my thoughts.
How could I see Mr. Chandler? I
had ruined his house, cheated him
out of his money, and unless I could
go on plundering and cheating him, I
couldn't go on with the boarding
house. If I DIDN'T go on, I couldn't
pay Mr. Chandler; if I DID go on, I
might only plunder and cheat him the
more. I never had been good at prob-
lems. At school I had always been
stupid with given quantities, yet after
quantities were my only hope just
then.

Mr. Chandler was rapping at the
door. I burst into tears as I undid
the bolt, and begged him to forgive
all the trouble and expense I had
caused him. His ceilings were spec-
tled; his carpets were drenched; the
plumber held the very foundation of
his house at an enormous ransom; I
was already hopelessly in his debt,
and yet must have more money, or
give up and die.

"How much money?" said Mr.
Chandler, very gently. "Don't cry,
my child. How much money?" Ex-
piring hope began to revive in my ag-
onized breast. He took my cold hand
within his own. "How much money
will it take to repair all the damages
here, and put the house in order for a
new tenant?"

"Don't speak my heart like a plum-
met of lead. I looked up in his face,
and was startled to find a new expres-
sion there; something indefinable. I
could almost say heroic. Aunt Maria
could never call that face 'wishy-
washy.' It was strong and noble. He
was evidently not to be trifled with.
When my miserable confession was
made, he would spare me as I deserv-
ed. If I had only been brave and
true from the first! It was too late
now. How I had loved Aunt Maria!
I thought of the terrible winter, of the
icy streets, the profligate people have
against tramps particularly so many,
six of us—six, the twins, the three
boys, and myself. I clasped my hands
in agony.

"What will become of me and my
children?" I cried.

"Come," he replied, with unspok-
able tenderness, "come out of this
room into the open garret. Sit! Now
the whole world may hear and see us.
Is it not so, my child? We are not
afraid of idle tongues?"

"N—no," I stammered, my heart in
my throat, for fear one of the boys
would pop his head up the garret
stairs and call mamma.

"You are so innocent," he contin-
ued, "so free from hypocrisy and de-
ceit, it is hard to make you under-
stand that I can not any longer lend
you money, or help you in the way
that I have done. The wicked innu-
endoes of slandering tongues that stab
in the dark have let me but one way
to protect you. I wonder if it will be
as holy, as sweet, to you as it is to
me? I wonder if you would be glad
to give up this vile nest of scandal all
together, and keep boarders
to-morrow, but a home for a
husband, who would adore you, and
would love and cherish your
dear little girls as his own?"

He didn't mention my dear little
boys, who were out raking their lives
at coasting that very moment. What
a noble, generous, altogether perfect
old gentleman he was! If Charley
had really been dead, and I had not
been the miserable impostor that cir-
cumstances had made me, my poor,
desolate, widowed heart would have
melted to him, I know. That heart
was desolate enough, God knows, but
it wasn't widowed; I was sure of that.
The time for my dreadful confession
had come. It was so hard to lose the
one thing that seemed left me just
then—his confidence, his esteem. I
felt cold and faint and sick.

"Dear Mr. Chandler," I began, "a
home and a husband would be very
welcome to me." And Heaven was my
witness I would, only not just the
husband he meant; and I was just go-
ing to tell him so, when Bridget put
her frowzy head above the stairs, and
said a man was below that wanted to
see me, and wouldn't take no for an
answer. "It's the plumber," I said,
tremblingly, "or the calciminer, or the
carpet man. Oh, Mr. Chandler, dear
Mr. Chandler, I cannot face these
people."

"You forget that you have given me
the right to share your troubles," he
said. "Come, my dear, we will face
this person together."

We found him in the parlor—a big,
broad-shouldered, splendid-looking
fellow, with a new ulster on, and a
very becoming hat, and a perfectly
splendid pair of boots, without a break
in them. The twins were clinging to
each other, and looking around him
were dancing and howling like In-
dians three dirty little boys.

"Moments there, and this was one.
Snatched like a minute's gleam of sun
amid the black-snow's eclipse."

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