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POETRY OF THE TIMES.

A Rose.
Boston Courier.
'Twas a Jacqueminot rose
That she gave me at parting;
Sweetest flower that blows
'Twas—a Jacqueminot rose.
In the lone garden close,
With the sweet blushes starting,
'Twas a Jacqueminot rose
That she gave me at parting.

If she kissed it who knows—
Since I will not discover
And long is that close—
If she kissed it, who knows?
Or if not the red rose
Perhaps then the lover?
If she kissed it, who knows,
Since I will not discover?

Yet at least with the rose
Went a kiss that I'm wearing!
More I will not discover,
Yet at least with the rose
Went whose kiss no one knows,
Since I'm only declaring,
That at least with the rose
Went a kiss that I'm wearing!

ALHO BATES.

Dreamy.
Afar in yon blue ether,
One star was shining brightly,
And hand in hand together
We gazed upon it nightly.

We gazed on it together,
Nor saw it e'er apart;
Nor I, nor she, the maiden,
The darling of my heart.

Your parent came up softly,
The clock was striking;
I saw the thought in her eye,
He fired me o'er the gate.

A Good-Night.
By-and-by, the evening falls
Sons of labor rest,
Weary cattle seek the stalls,
Birds are in the nest,
By-and-by the tide will turn,
Chance com' o'er the sky,
Life's hard task the child will learn,
By-and-by!

By-and-by, the din will cease,
Day's long hours be past,
By-and-by in bed we'll rest,
We shall sleep at last,
Calm will be the sea-wind's roar,
Calm we too shall lie,
Toil and toil and weep no more,
By-and-by!

UNDER THE MIDNIGHT LAMP.

I am a doctor, a busy professional man, whose time is money; whenever, therefore, I can save it, I do. Many and many a night I have passed in the train, counting the hours thus gained as a miner does his gold. Upon this point, unfortunately, my little wife and I do not agree; and it is, I think, the only point upon which we do not. Eight hours in a comfortable railway compartment, rolled up in your plaid like a snake in a blanket, instead of your comfortable spring mattress—no, she cannot be made to see the propriety of the exchange, nor will she believe that I sleep quite as well, if not disturbed, in the plaid as in the sheets.

The train was just off as I sprang in, and the shock of the start landed me in my seat. Being of a slow, placid nature, I was in no hurry to recover from the shock; and we were fairly off, speeding away, as only an English express can speed, as I looked round. I had not the carriage to myself, as I had at first supposed. A lady occupied the other end, and at the first glance, spite of the dim light and the fact of her veil being down, I saw that her eyes, unaturally large and intense in their expression, were fixed upon me. I at all times prefer the carriage to myself, and if a companion I must have, let it be a gentleman, not a lady; but there was no help for it, the lady was there, and, moreover, she was looking at me. "So she may," I said to myself as comfortably as circumstances will allow. Slowly and deliberately, therefore, I removed my hat, substituting for it a cloth cap, which I drew well down over my ears; then I folded my arms and composed myself to sleep. But in vain; the eyes of my fellow-passenger haunted me; I saw them as distinctly as if my own eyes were open. Was she watching me still? Involuntarily I looked up and round, and my look met hers, full, burning, intense and far more of meaning in it than I could fathom. It was growing decidedly unpleasant, and I was growing decidedly uncomfortable; try I could not keep my eyes closed; here were on me, and meet them I must.

In her attitude, too, as well as in her look, there was something strange and mysterious. Huddled up in the corner, she seemed to be holding something closely pressed to her, beneath the long, loose mourning cape, bending low over it in a crouching posture. Once or twice, her eyes still fixed upon mine, I saw her shiver; but for that slight, convulsive movement, she sat perfectly still and motionless.

Was she cold? I offered her my plaid, glad of an opportunity to break the ominous silence. If she would but speak, make some commonplace remark, the spell might be broken.

"I am not cold."
A commonplace remark enough; but the spell was not broken. The mystery that lay in her eyes lay also in her voice.

What should I try next? I looked at my watch—11:30 o'clock; our train speeding on at a furious rate, no chance of a stoppage for some time to come, and the full, wide open gaze of my motionless companion not for one moment removed from my face. It was unpleasant certainly. If I changed my position, faced the window instead of her, she must remove her eyes from my face at last. But there was a sort of fascination about her and her look, which I preferred meeting to shirking, knowing it was on me all the time.

There was nothing for it then but to give up all hope of sleep, and made the best of my position and companion, whom I now observed more closely. That she was a lady there could be little doubt; there was that in her dress and appearance that was unmistakable. That she was pretty there could be no doubt either; those great, dark, intensely dark eyes, the thick coils of warm brushed hair, the small pale features, seen dimly beneath the veil; yes, she was young, pretty, a lady, and in trouble. So far I got, but no further.

How came she to be traveling alone at that time of the night, and with that look on her face? What could it be that she was holding pressed so closely to her, and yet so carefully kept out of sight? From the size and uncertain outline I should have guessed it to be a child; but then, there was not the faintest motion, nor could she have held even a sleeping infant long in that position. I think that something of curiosity must have been betrayed in my look, for her own darkened and deepened into a perfect agony of doubt and fear.

"Ashamed, I withdraw my gaze at once, and drawing out my note-book, was about to make a memorandum, she fell at my feet, arresting my hand by the agonized grasp of her own, its burning contact sending through me a painful thrill.

"Don't betray me! Don't give me up to him! Oh don't, I'm so frightened!"

"It was but a whisper, breathed out rather than spoken, yet it shuddered through me like a cry.

"I cannot always hide it! I cannot always bear it about with me; it breaks my heart, and I am so tired."

And letting the hand which still held, pressed closely to her, the mysterious burden that had so raised my curiosity drop heavily to her side, there lay at her feet and mine a little dead baby, a tiny creature, evidently not many weeks old.

Then the woman threw up her veil, and withdrawing her eyes for the first time from mine, clasped her hands before her, her figure thrown slightly back, and looked down upon it. A pretty picture; the poor young mother, with her pale child's face and deep mourning dress, the wee baby, gleaming so white in its death and baby robe against the heavy crape skirt on which it lay—a pretty picture certainly for a railway carriage, and lighted by its dim midnight lamp.

"Dead!" was my involuntary exclamation.

She stretched her clasped hands downward toward it with a despairing gesture, speaking with a low, wild, rapid utterance.

"It was not his look that killed it, but my love. He hated it, my baby, my first-born; for all the love I gave him, he hated it; and that his look might not kill it, I held it in my arms so close, so close, till it was dead. Oh, my baby, my baby! The outstretched hands had reached it now, and raised it from the floor to the seat, folding it around until the enclosing arms and down-bent face hid it once more out of sight.

Was ever a less traveler more awkwardly placed!—the dead child; the prostrate woman; the scene, a public railway carriage; the hour, midnight. I am of a blunt nature. Mrs. Melton often scolds me for my blunt, straightforward speeches; but then she has such a pretty way of beating about the bush, which it would be as absurd for me to imitate as it was for the ass to mimic the tricks of his masters lap-dog. I must go straight to the point as soon as ever I see it. I did so now.

"How came you to be traveling alone, and with a dead child? Are you going home?"

The question seemed to rouse her once more to a perfect frenzy of fear. She turned to me as before, clinging to my hand with small, hot fingers, and the old heartbroken cry:

"Don't betray me; don't give me up to him! His look would have killed my baby; it would kill me if I had to meet it. She is safe, for I killed her, and she is dead, and he hates me, and I have no home—no home!"

I was in a perfect maze of doubt. Could the pretty, soft young creature at my feet be a murderer, and would it be her husband of whom she seemed in such abject terror. My blood boiled. I felt ready to defend her against a dozen husbands, but how?

It was midnight now; we could not be far from London; the guard might be popping his head in at any moment. I jumped to a sudden conclusion.

"Were you going to any friend in London?"

"I know nobody in London!"

"The poor little thing is either mad or her husband is a brute," was my mental exclamation.

"Asleep, under my wife's care; sleeping as peacefully as a child."

"Thank God! So young—at such an hour—in such a state—"

I saw a long shudder run through the tall, powerful frame.

"And the child!" he added, after a pause, in a horror-stricken whisper.

"She had it with her!"

I hardly knew what to answer; but he had thrown off his heavy ulster and traveling cap, and now stood before me as handsome and pleasant and honest looking a young fellow as I ever saw, and my heart warmed to him. He was no assassin, ruffian or cowardly bully, whatever Mary might say. The shadow of the great horror that lay in the great blue, mellow eyes had been laid there by terror, not crime.

"The child is dead," I said softly.

"It died two days ago, died suddenly in convulsions in her arms, and the shock turned her brain. She was doing so well, poor little thing; but afterward she grew delirious, and in her ravings she accused herself and me. I could do nothing; she would not have me near her, but beat me off with her hands, as she couldn't bear the sight of me. And I was so fond of her and she of me." Here the man broke down. He walked to the window, then turned and asked abruptly:

"May I go to her?"

I thought of Mary and hesitated.

"She is sleeping so peacefully just now, and if she awoke suddenly and saw you—"

"She shall not see me," he broke in eagerly. "I will be so quiet; but I must see her. I nursed her through a long illness a year ago, and she would have none near her but me, and now—"

dining room. He says he must see her—must come in."

"That he shall not," the vile wretch, or I shall be over my prostrata body!"

"Well, go and tell him so."

"I will!" and away, nothing daunted, went Mary.

I smiled. "She will no more resist the pleading of those blue, handsome eyes, than did her husband. He will win her over with a look." I was right; she soon returned, and was not alone.

"He will be very quiet, and she need not see him. I thought it would be better," apologetically.

He crossed the room as noiselessly as a woman, stooped over the bed in silence, then sat down beside it. Mary shaded the lamp so that the room was in twilight, and he was all there at dawn to wait.

For more than an hour we waited, then Mary stole out. Captain Tremayne looked up as the door opened and closed; then, with a quick sigh, laid the brown curly head down upon the pillow as close as possible to that of the poor young wife without touching it, and his hand moved up toward hers, where it lay on the coverlet, but without touching that, either for fear of waking or disturbing her.

It was not until the first gray streaks of daylight were struggling in through the window, beside which I sat, that there was a slight stir; she was awaking at last, and with a quick sigh—

"Hugh! his breathers—dreamily at first, then urgently—"Hugh!"

"Yes, dear."

She turned her face toward where it lay beside her. She was only partially awake as yet, her eyes were still closed, but the hand on the coverlet crept softly toward him, fluttered over his face, rested one moment carelessly on the brown curls, then, with a long contented sigh, her arm stole around his neck.

"Husband, kiss me!"

"His presence has saved her," was my mental comment; "there is nothing now to fear," and, unnoticed, I left the room.

Chilled and cramped with the long sitting after the night's journey, I was not sorry to find the sitting room bright with lamp and firelight, the kettle singing on the hob, breakfast as comfortably laid out for two as if the hour had been nine instead of six and Mrs. Melton as neat and fresh and trim as if that midnight tragedy had been all a dream. Let cavaliers sneer as they may, there is nothing for man like a wife, if she be a good one. I myself may have had my doubts on the subject—wives are but women, after all, and must therefore be trying at times, even the best of them. But I certainly had no doubts whatever, as I stretched out my feet to the blaze, and resigned myself cheerfully to being petted and waited on.

"Well?" questioned Mrs. Melton, when my creature comforts had all been attended to, and not before. I told her how matters stood, and she was delighted.

"And so they are fond of each other, after all; and his being unkind to her and her poor little baby was only a delusion. How dreadful! How delightful; I mean! Poor fellow, so young and handsome and nice! I felt so sorry for him."

"He must have traveled down in the same train as she did."

"Oh, no; he told me all about it. He had been summoned up to town on business, and left home yesterday morning. In the evening the nurse left her, as she thought, asleep, to fetch something from the kitchen."

"Have a gossip there you mean?"

"John," solemnly, "you don't like nurses; you know you don't."

"My dear, I am a married man, and moreover, an M. D. A well-balanced mind must hate somebody, or some class of bodies, and, as a rule, medical men hate nurses."

"Nonsense, John! Well, Mrs. Tremayne got away while the nurse was down stairs, and, being traced to the station, where she had taken a ticket for London, Captain Tremayne was telegraphed to, and was stopped as he got into the train on his way home. Some one must have seen you leave the station."

"As he came to look for her here, somebody must have brought him—two came to the door."

"It will be all right now that he has found her, and he will only have to comfort her for the loss of her poor little baby."

I wipe my pen, blot the MS., and rise. My story is done, and as it is the last of which I shall be guilty.

Mrs. Melton looks up from the glove she is mending. "The story done? Why, all you have written is only the beginning of the end. You could not surely have the heart to break off in that unsatisfactory manner. Not a word about Captain Tremayne's gratitude, or the hamper they sent us at Christmas, or the birth of their little son last year, and the pretty way in which she coaxed you to be goatherd, though her uncle, the duke, was only waiting to be asked; or how she insisted upon our bringing baby, and Johnny and Freddy, and how baby—"

But I seized my hat and gloves. Mary is, as I have said, the best of wives, if just a little trying at times, and her baby the most wonderful of all created babies—but I have an appointment at 12 o'clock.

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