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THE DEAD SPARROW.

Mortals, and immortals, hear,
I have no other song for you
Things that will harrow
Every sympathetic bosom;
Gone is its eternal song
In the time my girl caressed—
Dead is Lesbia's sparrow!

It knew Lesbia quite as well
As did Lesbia herself
Knew her pretty old mother
Dreamed in the fifteen years
Even whose reach it seldom strayed,
It was wont to serenade
Lesbia, and none other.

Victim to Plutonian wrath,
Now it lies along the path
Downward, dark and narrow;
Melancholies on its head,
Grief has lost (sorrow) red
Are the bonbonest eyes that shed
Tenderness for dead sparrows!

—Eugene Field in Chicago News.

IN LOVE AND WAR.

The story of a country village is the story of its store.

That wonderful place where the mail and the molasses flow from a common source, so to speak—where your inner and outer man, your mental and physical self, must get all their stimulus—is the epitome of all the diffusely written history of the lives that cluster around it.

What the store man cannot tell you of every passer by and every customer you are not likely to learn yourself, except by unusual fortune; and all he does tell you has the delightful piquancy of having passed through the medium of a ready shrewd mind, gaining more than one beauty spot in the transit.

That was what I was thinking as I sat in Bijah's store, with the mingled odors of calico print and dried apples, coffee and the straw that crockery is packed in fighting for supremacy in my notice.

Bijah's head back was turned to me and he was sorting the day's mail with comments that made me as wise as himself regarding its contents.

"My! My-randy Peal," said Bijah; "that'll be almost her pension, I guess. Rather official lookin, that is. Mr. Asy Fowler; his son John—gone down to Pocksonville—he writes he him sigh enlee every week—sin a nice, clean hand he writes, does John. Here's a letter for the schulmaa'am. Now that's han'written for yel Putty as she is, as jest as simple like."

The latch clicked and the door opened. Bijah looked over his shoulder and grinned. I was shut out from sight of more than the visitor's legs by a stack line of dangling towels, aprons and socks; but they were steady, reliable looking legs, straight and strong, clothed in heavy boots and blue overalls.

Bijah neither turned nor laid down his letters. He stood there grinning, and whether the person in the doorway was grinning also, or plotting my assassination in pantomime, I was none the wiser.

The heavy boots shuffled and turned about, stepped outside and the door shut. Bijah chuckled to himself and looked back to his letters again.

"Them papers is for young Thompson. He's th' editor of our paper. He's alive—alive on kickin. He's been out west for a spell, an he thinks we're all dead an buried. An he has made a great change in The Bugler, I tell you. Folks say he'll be made tee smart for the way he muses round inter people's affairs, but it's lively, it's lively."

The papers went into a separate box, and Bijah resumed the letters.

"Mehaly Hopkins; she's got a heap of money. Mann knew find yer folks is of ye when yer got a pile and ain't no heirs of yer buddy. She's good fer em though; she's a cute 'un."

"I suppose it is unusual for any one to make much more than their living away up here, isn't it, 'Bijah?"

"Humph! yes, for any one. Not fo some on 'em though. Some on 'em is smarter 'n greased lightnin."

He put his head on one side and squinted at the letter he was holding.

"Hm, now, Jeremiah Wilson, he's a keen un. Nobody ever got the best o th' olee man but Jim. You saw Jim—came in here jest now; ain't no 'nter hogs on Jim; when he gits up he's up fer all day."

'Bijah grinned and wagged his head.

"Jere-miah—Wilson!" he remarked, and slapped the letter into its pigeon-hole.

The latch clicked again, the door opened and the same pair of legs appeared in the very same spot where I had seen them before.

'Bijah grinned.

Presumably the unseen grinned also, for there was too much of 'Bijah's grin not to be offensive, if it were otherwise.

"What ehs want?"

"Nothin."

"We don't keep that; or, if we do, were jest sold of it."

The big heels turned about slowly.

"Sure yo do' want no lamps, are yo?"

"Gals go with 'em?"

"Not in this shop."

"Thet settles it, as far as I'm concerned," and he went away and closed the door again.

'Bijah looked after him and chuckled.

"What's the joke, 'Bijah?"

"Dono' ex I'd orter say an'thin, sort-side, but you know how it is, Mr. Cannon, you never seem no stranger."

"Hand over your story, you old gossip," I answered. "Why, it would burn your tongue off if you tried to keep it in."

'Bijah laughed heartily at this polite sally.

"Well, I take fer my tex', as Elder Hocum says, that beautiful scuse, 'All is fair in love an war.'"

He crossed the end of the counter and sat on an unopened sugar barrel, with his legs crossed and his rough hands clasped around his knee.

"Th' olee man, Jeremiah Wilson, that I mentioned back a spell, he's a Tartar. He do' know nothin but his own way; an Mic Wilson, she never know'd nothin but her gin it to him. He's got a trick in his eye, an Mic Wilson, she was so neat, she couldn't bear fer her her house unmeed, so she jest gin in to him.

"Thet was one gal—Mame her name was—an they hup thought a right of her. She wa'n't no more like mother nor them then nothin at all, and they both tried prejacks with her.

"Her father wanted her to be a boy, an he allus felt as if she done him wher she ought. He wanted her make a lawyer out er her; he's dead in love with lawin, ole man Wilson an last yer night letter try tee make a honeake out of whaleboone an giraffe an tetrahedrons fer yer outer Mame. What th' ole man call wus Gospel, though; she felt sorter like she better not make him no more hard feelin, effer not bein that hep he wanted.

"Her mother meant her tee be a good housekeeper an get up pi'ernes an pickles; an Mame would stan at the winder an sing an forgit all about her mass till 'twas clean spilt.

"After Mic Wilson died, though, Mame done better round the house. Mebbe of th' ole man went tee die she'd take ter lawin. Ye can't tell; she kin do most an'thin.

"Just almost then, Jim Lane hegan ter circle round with Mame Wilson. Smart as a steel trap, he; he ran the sawmill up the Creek; but th' ole man hates him like pizen, an he talked her Mame till she 'loved she wouldn't tetee up with Jim, 'less he was willin."

"Jim Lane is the durndest good natured feller you ever see. He's allus got a good word an a pleasant smile for folks, an he'll go further out o' his track for a friend 'n most any body I know.

"He took it offul hard almost Mame, an he cry'd got many an down in the mouth about it. An then he got his second wind, an he tried every mitch way to play it on th' ole man. But Mame she got pretty chiffy, too, an she declared she'd never 'pose her father, an thet 'twas."

'Bijah got off the barrel to sell a couple of candy balls to a boy fawd little lass who was so short as to be ridiculo under the shack line, and resumed, as she closed the door of the shop—

"The hull village knew all about it and they talked it up, early an late. The gals they wasn't slow ter say what they'd do if they was ter her place, and The Bugler took a hand, so ter speak, an nearly drove the ole man wild. But Miss Peterson, the minister's sister, she 'loved that Mame was right ter mind her father.

"'Look a-here,' says Jim, 'ain't I got no rights at all?' an Miss Peterson she laughed an said she s'posed so, but he certainly did n't orter ask Mame tee take the responsibility of breakin her word."

'Bijah chuckled and changed his legs and cinged the other knee.

"Twasn't very long after that ole Wilson went home one night. Twas gettin nearly dinner an he hit Mame she'd better get the lamp afore she set down ter tea. Mame wur again through the entryway with a whipple great shade lamp in her hand, when somebody knocked ter the front door, and she jest stopped an opened it without thinkin.

"Jim Lane was a-standin there. 'Don't say nothin, Mame,' says he, an he take her hollin lamp an all, and hooks her inter a carriage that he had at the gate. He didn't feel round with no railroad train, but just thrued them horses' heads fer Canada, an when they got ter the line Mame was a-sittin there as still as a mouse, without say hot or cold, an that big shade lamp a burnin just as pert as if it was on the ole man Wilson's table ter home."

'Bijah spat at the stove and laughed to himself.

"Fearful thing—the ingratitude of children, ain't it? But you'd orter see The Bugler sez' mornin. Every dee blamed column in it hel a big hole line, 'Jim Lane has got his gal. Jim Lane has got his gal.' Gosh! that jest proved ole Wilson wouldn't never, hev beated when he didn't beat that mornin.

"He went whoopin off ter his lawyer ter see what he cud do to Jim, but Mame she was of age an she writ back that she went of her own free will; an all he could make any fuss about was the lamp, an they've been a lawin an fussin an a-arbitratin ever sence."—Margaret Ingersoll in Boston Transcript.

Danger in Meat Diet.

The evils of a meat diet are being appreciated by many high livers in cities, and these are being counteracted partly by the wealthy in adding more fruits and vegetables to their tables during the winter. The cheapness of meat and a peculiar craving which the system seems to have for meat have gradually made it common for city people to live almost entirely off meat in the winter months. Meat is eaten three times a day in quantities, and the excessive use of such a diet is that rheumatic and gout temperaments are acquired. These temperaments are on the increase, and they are largely due to the excessive use of meat.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

Had His Eye on Something

"My daughter," said the loving father, with perhaps a shade of harshness in his voice, "what does that young man who calls on you every evening in a dress suit do for a living?"

"He hasn't determined yet, father," replied the fair girl, with a glad look in her eyes, "but he is thinking something of getting a position as life companion to a young lady."—Cloak Review.

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