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SEPARATION.

Ah! we were very near tonight
The simple word for which we hunted,
And there were moments when I thought
Our happiness could not be wronged!

Why was it, when you changed your place
And passed on stairs behind my chair,
That all the life within me thrilled
With pleasure that was half despair?

Why was it that I felt your gaze
Still fixed upon me as I read,
Yet, with a strange, defiant fear,
Refused too well to turn my head?

How came it that we lingered on
An eve by one the rest withdrew,
Till, without seeing, I was sure
That I was left alone with you?

Could you not hear my pages feel
Turned over with a restless hand?
Did they not whisper all your wish
In words not hard to understand?

A word had done it! With a flash
Of heaven's own light from heart to heart,
Resistless love had rent the gates
That kept our proud souls apart!

But ere it came a sudden breath,
The rising wind of common life,
Blew cool upon us and we sighed
And turned us to our lonely strife.
—S. W. Snodding in Toronto Truth.

EVEN UP TO DATE.

"I can't help how much yer love me, Van; I can't marry yer, and you'd just as well look at matters in a reasonable way."

"But why, Mandy? There ain't no other feller yer thinkin' more of than yer air of me, is there?"

"I'm talkin fair and squar' to yer, Van Jones. I've always liked yer as a friend, but if yer want to keep friendly with me yer'll have to stop this talk right here. I've told yer that I didn't like yer, and, more'n that, I never could, an as to lovin or thinkin more of somebody else that's somethin I don't think concerns ye in the least."

"Oh, come now, Mandy, don't put me off in this here way. If yer a friend to me it won't take yer long to love me. I've been mighty nigh crazy for ye for the last three year. I've got so I can't work for thinkin of yer in the day nor sleep for thinkin of yer in the night. There's lots o' other girls in Chincapin Holler, but yer takes the shine out of all of 'em. They're no more like yer than a dishrag's like a silk handkercher. In my eye yer as far above 'em as Pilot Knob's above Cowskin Flat. I'd give my mansion in the New Jerusalem for just one kiss o' them purty little red lips o' yer's." So saying, Van tried to draw Mandy toward himself, but Mandy with flashing eyes arose to her feet, and as she did so gave him a smart slap in the face and said:

"Van Jones, yer a fool! Ye take yerself right off from here or I'll call pa. I've been a-tryin to reason with yer as a friend, but I see yer ain't got no sense. There's the door, and don't yer never come back here again."

"But, Mandy"——

"Don't Mandy me—pa!"

Van did not stop to meet "pa," but took up his hat and, with a scowl on his face and an oath in his heart, left the house. He was an ill visaged fellow. His features wore the unmistakable marks of cruelty, cunning and sensuality. His face was dark naturally, but it was colored a deeper dye by the smoke of his forge, for Van was the blacksmith of Chincapin Hollow. His burly black head was set upon a thick neck and thus fastened to a herculean trunk. He had all the characteristics of a cruel and ferocious being. He wended his way slowly up the Hollow, muttering curses as he went.

"I know who she's struck on; its that darn Sam Gray, but by thunder I'll get even with 'em," he hissed between his teeth. "She wouldn't own to-to it, but I've had my eye on him, confound him."

It was a lovely Sunday evening in the month of September, in that part of Arkansas called the Boston mountains. The sides of the mountains were covered with luxuriant chincapins, scrubby oaks and trailing, heavy laden muscadines. The scenery in Chincapin Hollow was delightful to one in a frame of mind to enjoy it, but Van Jones saw none of its beauties, in fact it is doubtful if he ever was conscious of them.

If he took any further notice of them at all it was as rock, water and brush. He soon reached his shop, which stood some distance up the hollow. It was an old log building, whose caving roof bore a striking resemblance to a swayback horse. The tottering chimney visible above the gable had the rakish air of a battered silk tile on a drunken sailor. The door, hung on a single hinge, and being partly open, exposed the interior of the building to view. The tools were lying promiscuously around, and it was evident that Van was not a neat shopkeeper. He entered the building, still bitterly cursing his luck and swearing vengeance against his rival.

"I'll get even with him if it takes fifty years," he snarled. "He shan't marry Mandy Piggin because he's got a good farm and a horse or two more'n I've got. I'll get even with him if I've got to burn his barn or pizen his well. I'll let him know that the man he's buckin agin in this business ain't no slouch," and a diabolical scowl settled over his features as he ceased muttering and drew from his pocket a large clasp knife, which he proceeded to sharpen upon a grindstone.

While Van was thus occupied the sun was slowly sinking. Long shadows fell across the Hollow. Gradually the distant mountain tops were wrapped in roseate mists, and over the valleys floated purple vapors. The shadows begin to deepen in the Hollow, and finally the last ray of light vanishes from the mountain's peak. First one bright star and then another rises in the east, peering down into the shadows below. Slowly the heavens become decked with the myriads of bright scintillating gems of night. It is a calm, delightful night in early autumn; the pure mountain air, like an ethereal elixir, exhilarates and cheers both man and beast.

In the starlit night a man on horseback is seen slowly riding toward Jefferson Piggin's house. He seems to be in no hurry, for he allows the splendid mare he is riding to choose her own gait. He rides up to the front of the picket fence surrounding the house, throws the bridle over one of the pickets, and knocking gently at the door is met by the blushing Mandy and bashfully invited in.

"Howdy do, Miss Mandy? How air ye this evenin?"

"Purty well, I thank ye, Mr. Gray. How air ye and how air yer folks?"

"I'm purty well, I thank ye, and the folks air about as common. Been enjoyin yerself today, Miss Mandy?"

"No, I haven't, Mr. Gray. It's been an uncommon still day to me. You been injoying yerself today, Mr. Gray?"

"No, I can't say that I hev," Miss Mandy. I was down at a shootin match at Cowskin Flat, but there was no good shootin done, and I came home. But looks like a purty gal like you shouldn't feel lonesome—hey, Miss Mandy?"

"Why not, Mr. Gray? Don't yer think gals git lonesome sometimes?"

"Well, I thought, Miss Mandy, ye'd have plenty company, specially on Sunday."

"Oh, yes, I've had company, but it wasn't a bit agreeable. I'd rather be alone at any time than to hev it."

"If it's a fair question, who's been yer company today, Miss Mandy?"

"Nobody in perticler—at least that's what I think of Van Jones."

"Why, seems to me, Miss Mandy, that Van ought to be purty good company; he's a right smart feller, I always thought."

"Well, I don't like him, Mr. Gray, and hope he'll never call agin."

"Why, Miss Mandy, did you and him hev any trouble?"

"A little, not much."

"Would ye mind tellin me what it was about, Miss Mandy?" and Sam bashfully hitched his chair a few inches nearer the blushing Mandy.

"I'd rather not, Sam," she replied, hanging her head in modesty at calling him for the first time by his given name.

"Of course, Mandy, if it's a secret I don't want to hear it; it's none of my business to hear, I reckon, is it, Mandy?" and Sam's arm began a cautious journey around Miss Mandy's apron strings.

Mandy (unconsciously, no doubt) helped Sam's arm along a little by leaning toward him, as she answered:

"Well, Sam, I guess you won't tell anybody if I tell you. Van Jones's been tryin his best to get me to have him, and I just p'intedly told him he couldn't. He then wanted to know if I thought more of some one else, and I told him it didn't concern him. I had to threaten to call pa before he'd leave. He was powerfully disappinted when I give him no for an answer. I've allus thought purty well of Van as a friend, but I'm afraid if his dander's up he'll do somethin mean."

"And what did you refuse Van fer, Mandy?" said Sam as he gave the girl a sly squeeze.

"How kin yer ask, Sam? Didn't yer know kase why? Kin a woman marry a man she don't luv?"

"Then yer didn't luv Van, Mandy, is that a fac', an couldn't yer if he'd starved yer?"

"No, Sam, I never could," and Mandy looked at the floor as she spoke.

"Mandy, if yer don't and can't luv Van, and yer ain't luvin anybody else, how,—er—an—er—humph! would yer like ter"——

"Like ter what?" softly asked Mandy.

"As I was goin on ter say, Mandy," and he took one of her hands in his as he continued, "as I was goin on ter say —if yer don't luv Van, and yer have told him to go, how'd it be if er—I—er—was ter ax"— Here Sam stopped stock still, as if he was unable to proceed any farther.

Mandy beamed encouragingly on him and, smiling one of her sweetest smiles, said:

"What was yer goin ter say, Sam? Yer needn't be a bit uneasy, Sam, for I won't say a word about it ter anybody, if it's a secret."

"Well, as I was a-sayin, Mandy, if yer don't like any other feller better than yer do me—would er—er—yer mind o' havin me?" and Sam broke down completely.

Mandy turned as red as a hollyhock, and it seemed to Sam that the weight of her shoulder increased as it rested heavily against him. Whether he feared that he could not thus support her weight or that she would fall, he suddenly clasped her in his arms. She threw her arms around his neck and sweetly whispered in his ear, "I luv yer, Sam, and I'll have yer."

A pair of wicked eyes gleamed through the single, uncurtained window at the picture. The eyes were those of Van Jones.

"Ah! yer there, are yer, blast yer!" he ground between his teeth. "Well, I'd like ter kill yer both, but I'll not do it tonight. But I know what I can do. I can spile the beauty of this yer fine mare o' his'n. He'll never know who done it," and walking to where Sam's mare stood patiently awaiting her master's return, he whipped his knife from his pocket and in another instant cut off both of the poor animal's ears close to her head.

"There now," he growled to himself. "Sam Gray, I know that'll almost kill yer when ye see it. I wish to God it would," and the brute slunk off in the darkness to his den.

When Sam Gray on the following morning discovered the disfigurement of his best horse—by the loss of both her ears—he was the maddest man in "seven states." Yet he held his tongue. Sam was not a man to make threats. He was a reticent fellow and kept his troubles to himself. But he was mad, and in his heart he swore to be revenged on the one who had perpetrated the outrage. The first person whom he suspected was Van Jones. He knew his rival's dastardly nature full well.

He took out his claspknife and carefully examined its edge. It seemed to be satisfactory. Without saying a word to any one he leisurely walked into Van's shop. The latter was pumping away at his bellows.

"Van," he began, "you've cut off my mare's ears, and I've come here to settle with yer."

"I didn't do anything of the kind, Sam Gray, and yer know it," snarled Van.

"I didn't come ter argy with yer, Van. Git down on yer knees," and as he spoke Sam threw the cold muzzle of his pistol in Van's face.

"Good God! yer not goin to kill me, air yer, Sam!" piteously cried the cringing coward as he sunk to his knees. Lord, Sam, don't kill me! For mercy sake, take that pistol away from my head!"

"Yer didn't have any mercy on my mare, Van. But yer needn't ter be afraid. I ain't ter goin to kill yer, but I've a great mind ter. I'm just goin to trim them ears o' yers like yer trimmed the mare's."

With the pistol still leveled at Van's head, Sam drew his knife from his pocket, opened it with his teeth, and with two rapid strokes the man's ears lay upon the ground. Turning to the terrified wretch, who seemed hardly conscious of his condition, Sam said, "That makes us even up ter date, Van," and left the shop.—Arkansaw Traveler.

Good Looks Not a Disadvantage.

At a meeting of the board of education on Wednesday among the recommendations of the committee on finance was the appointment of Miss Rose A. Redgate, of Brooklyn, as a stenographer in the office of the clerk of the board. Before the vote was taken Commissioner O'Brien moved to substitute the name of Miss Hattie L. McCarthy for that of Miss Redgate. "Gentlemen," he said, "would you know why Miss McCarthy was not recommended for the place by our committee on finance? The objection to her was that she is good looking. Gentlemen, that is the first time since I have been a member of this board that I have known of a committee objecting to the handiwork of the Almighty. I do not profess to be an humanitarian, but I do not fear a beautiful woman." When the vote was taken Miss McCarthy was elected by a handsome majority. —New York Tribune.

$7,000 a Year for Remembering Names.

To remember people's names is a great thing. I know a man in a great wholesale establishment in Chicago who gets $7,000 a year just for remembering names. His business is to speak to every one who comes in by name and to introduce the customer to the clerk of the department sought. If he does not introduce the person to the clerk by name, the clerk is expected to find out the name and communicate it quietly to the gentleman near the door, who bids him or her goodby by name. This always flatters people and they come back again.—Washington Star.

Styles of Architecture.

In their architecture the Moresque strove for the negation of the weight altogether; the Egyptian placed the weight firmly on the ground; the Greek lifted it up in the air, with an assertion of graceful power; the Roman confused weight and support; the Byzantine represented weight without support; the Moor suggested that there was no weight at all.—London Tablet.

No Heirlooms.

Mrs. Mailbour (after proudly showing her family treasures to her neighbor's little daughter)—Have you any such heirlooms at home, my little dear?

Little Dear (with dignity)—No'm. I guess our folks was always rich 'nough to trow away their old things an buy new ones.—Good News.

Few women have attained any distinction as composers, and yet in music halls or at the opera the women exceed the men in numbers and apparent appreciation of the music.

Aristocratic Kentucky People.

"If there be an aristocracy in America," said J. K. Parish, of Versailles, Ky., "it is in the blue grass region of Kentucky. A person who has never made an extended visit to that section has no conception of the delights of country life in America. In the west and north the people are gradually flocking to the towns and cities because of the hardships of rural life. But this is not true of the blue grass region. There are no big cities there. All our people want is a postoffice and a few stores in which to make their purchases. They live on their ancestral estates like English dukes and princes. The country is so traversed by turnpikes, which are superior to your city paved streets, that the problem of transportation of their farm products to market is reduced to the minimum and neighborhoods are brought into close and intimate touch."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

The variations in the magnetic needle, so long inexplicable, are now ascribed to the presence in the earth underneath of ore and metal bearing rocks. When the variation changes, becoming greater at irregular intervals, it is believed that internal disturbances in the earth shift the position of the rock strata.

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