

Fanny H-----; or, The Hunchback and the Roue

J. H. Ingraham

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CHAPTER I.

'The plague was in the air, and men breathed death. Fear made all faces pallid, and dried up charity; Love of life drank up all better feeling, and man Looked upon his fellow man with dread! Brother, His brother shunned, and in all breasts died Sweet humanity.'

The Charles river flows through many a sweet vale in its inland meanderings; mirrors upon its bosom many a dark hill of wood and rock; conveys beauty and grace to many a fair scene of upland and lowland; and flows calmly and brightly past many a peaceful cot and pleasant village! But the vale of Rose Mead is the fairest of all its vallies; its banks and wooded heights the most beautiful, which it mirrors upon its bosom; the fairest of all others are its scenes of upland and lowland; more peaceful the cottage-homes which share its grace and beauty; and, lovelier than all the pleasant villages past which it flows in calmness and brightness, is that of Hillside.

The soft, rose-dyed shadows of a lingering summer twilight were gathering upon the vale and in the village streets, which were few in number and darkened with the noble elms that lined their green, path-like, sidewalks. The village lay upon a gentle hill-side, that rose behind it in a rocky ledge and wood-crowned eminence, on which the last beams of the setting sun were now redly glowing, the vale lying in shadow. In front of the village, just at the base of the hill-side, flowed the Charles river in transparent beauty, its opposite shores stretching away into green meadows, with here and there a farm-house and barns hidden in a group of old trees. At a greater distance beyond could be seen from the height back of the town, the spires of neighboring towns; and in a clear morning the widely-seen dome of the State House was visible many a league away, with the towers of Harvard University rising with picturesque effect in the intermediate space.

The main street of the village was singularly quiet and deserted for the twilight hour, when villagers, their labors done, most love to congregate about the stoops and shop doors, and talk of passing news. Up and down the shaded street but, here and there, could be seen one walking hurriedly and the next moment disappearing in a side street that led up to a church. Suddenly the deep sound of a bell from its tower broke with soft melody upon the evening stillness of the vale and village, and deepening in sound as it was tolled, soon filled the whole valley with a sweet harmony. Amid the trees covering the lawn and church-yard, lying beneath the tower, could be seen groups of the

villagers standing silent, and with faces wearing an expression of fear and dread; and they looked this way and that, or one whispered gravely to a neighbor, who replied not but shook his head; while children with countenances of wondering alarm clung about their mothers; for mother and maid, fathers and young men, the aged sire and the infant at the breast were all there assembled beneath the deep shadows of the church grove, while the solemn bell pealed through the air above. Some young men, a little removed from the throng, were watching in silence a neat white dwelling, situated in a retired street by the river banks. No smile, no jest, no lightness of speech or look marked the usual buoyancy of their age. All were alike grave and awe-impressed! What dread event was at hand? What cause out of the common order of life had unpeopled the village beneath and driven to that church-yard height the whole of its population? Hark! what word is that we hear spoken with pale lips and in an under tone of fear! 'Tis uttered in that group of young maidens, and each face grows paler still! 'Tis spoken by one of those old men, and the grey-headed listeners, placing their hands upon their breasts, look heavenward with a sigh and a whispered prayer! 'Tis low breathed in that circle of mothers, and to each maternal heart is folded with alarmed affection closer the smiling babe!

'The Cholera!'

The whisper is hushed! All eyes simultaneously turn to a venerable man who enters the gravel path leading to the church door. As he approaches near to his parishioners he uncovers his head. He slowly, with humble yet dignified mien, enters their reverent midst, and opening his prayer-book lays it upon a white marble tomb before him. The bell ceases to toll. Every head is uncovered. All denominations of the village are united as one before the man of God! Fear and common danger draws closer together the hearts of men; and there are now but two thoughts Time and Eternity! Two great overwhelming ideas Man below; God above! Divisions and sects are forgotten. The aged minister kneels, and the multitude kneel around him. How silent that prostrate assembly! They kneel among the dead, yet as silent as they save the 'muffled beating' of many hundred hearts! The buried dead the kneeling living Heaven over all! The low voice of the rector breaks the silence. The words of the prayer to be offered in the Time of Great Sickness and Mortality are heard. How fervent how humble yet how earnest: 'O Almighty God, the Lord of life and death, of sickness and health; regard our supplications, we humbly beseech thee; and as thou hast thought fit to visit us (as a nation) for our sins with great sickness and mortality, in the midst of thy judgment, O Lord, remember mercy. Have pity upon us miserable sinners, and withdraw from us the grievous sickness with which we are afflicted. May this thy fatherly correction have its due influence upon us, by leading us to consider how frail and uncertain our life is; that we may apply our hearts unto that heavenly wisdom, which in the end will bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

'Amen!' came from the kneeling multitude like the deep voice of the winds passing over the heaving sea.

The minister then rose and stood by the side of the tomb, and with him stood up the whole assembly.

'My friends,' he spoke in a voice grave, as became the time, but singularly benevolent in its tone, 'our peaceful village is at length visited by the hand of a just God, who, let it not be forgotten, is also our Heavenly Father. The pestilence that walketh in darkness and wasteth at noonday has for weeks been sweeping over the cities of our land, and in the fearful effects thereof an angry God has made visible his judgments: for assuredly doth this visitation come upon us as a nation and as individuals for our misdeeds. Sin's highest and most powerful throne is ever in large cities, and there the bolts of Divine wrath first fell. But sin hath its home in every place, and into its most secluded retreats the ravaging pestilence, which is the Almighty's arrow, will penetrate to wound and slay. We have sinned and we may not escape. A few days since we heard of the presence of the Great Messenger of Heaven's displeasure in the neighboring metropolis, yet we humbled not ourselves as we have done this evening; but trusted to human means and civil vigilance to protect our borders. But with the stride of an avenging angel the invisible Punisher hath this day overstrode your feeble cordons, and fixed the plague-spot above the threshold of one of your habitations, and you have fled and left him to reign there at his will. We should earlier have deprecated Divine wrath when his vengeance yet lingered and, peradventure, we might have been spared. We are now humbled before the terrible power of his presence, and I trust that our repentance will be accepted, and that

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we shall not perish, we and our wives and our little ones; for God is a God of love, and delighteth in mercy rather than in judgment.'

The speaker ceased to address the listening throng congregated beneath the trees in the soft evening twilight, and turned to a young man who stood near him and said:

'Are the bearers ready, Eustace?'

'We are sir. Four in all.'

'Enough for mercy to spare, for vengeance to sacrifice!'

'We fear not, sir,' said the young man firmly.

'Nay no man should fear to do what duty requires of him! This is a sacred duty. You are of my own blood, and very dear to me,' added the venerable man with visible emotion; 'but it must be that some one be offered up, if God will it, to save a multitude! Thou shalt be one of them, though my heart—strings draw thee closer as I contemplate the danger before thee! Who are thy companions?'

'These, sir,' answered the youth, pointing to three young men who stood at a short distance off, and around whom were gathered weeping sisters and mothers.

'Let them come hither. I would give them, with you, my blessing, son.'

The three young men approached and stood uncovered before the aged rector. The villagers gathered round, moved with feelings like a sea upheaved.

'Brave youths: you have volunteered a noble service to all this unhoused and fearful multitude. Each of you I held an infant in my arms at the font and blessed you. Now kneel before me in manhood, and let me lay my hands upon your head and bless you, and pray that you may have strength of heart to do what you are this day called upon to do, and be spared from becoming victims to your noble courage.'

The venerable pastor then laid his hands upon each of their heads, lingering over that of his youngest son longest, and lifting up his eyes blessed them. The words of blessing were repeated by every mouth, and the four young men rose up. The tower bell now solemnly commenced tolling the funeral chime, and slowly two by two the young men passed through the parting throng and took their way along the path that led to the village. A mother, or a sister, or perchance she was a maiden who loved more than a sister, were seen to follow them a step or two with tearful, earnest gaze, and out-goings of the heart after them; but the young men looked not back, and these turned aside to weep together. The throng of villagers now moved in a body towards the verge of the hill which overlooked the village, the pleasant river, and the stage road to Boston winding far along its green banks. Across the road, at the entrance of the main street, was also visible a heavy barrier of timber, which had been thrown across three days before.

The young men were seen descending the path to the village at a rapid pace, and were soon lost to the eyes of the hundreds on the height, by the overshadowing trees that lined the way. Every look was now turned with intense interest in the direction of the pretty white cottage situated in the lane leading to the river, and in a few minutes the forms of the young men were seen in the lane advancing to the house. A shudder passed through the crowd, and a momentary agitation the result of some deep and painful horror moved it like a forest swayed by a strong wind. The cottage and grounds were plainly visible in the twilight, night not having yet obscured any object in the whole valley which glowed with a rosy tint from the west. It was not more than a third of a mile distant; and lay like a sweet picture of repose and peace beneath them! But this dwelling was now only an object of horror and

dread.

The afternoon previous a carriage had been stopped at the barrier of the village on the Boston side, where the cholera was then raging, and the anticipation of its visitation filling all the region around with panic, and almost suspending communication with all approaches from the capital. It was a hackney carriage, as a number on the door indicated, and a trunk was lashed on the boot. It was driven by a negro, who had been seen for three miles back lashing his horses to their top speed to reach the village. This suspicious circumstance increased the usual vigilance of the guard of the cordon, and its advance drew near the barrier quite a crowd of townspeople. When near the barrier the coachman with difficulty reined in his foaming horses, and was evidently, by his looks, surprised to find his way obstructed. As the carriage stopped, a lady of great beauty, but pale as marble, and with a look of the most anxious distress put her head out of the window, and was about to demand the cause of the delay when her glance fell on the barrier of timbers. She instantly clasped her hands together with an expression of the most poignant despair, exclaiming:

'God have mercy, for man will have none! Oh, my husband! he will die, he will die, without shelter or aid! What is to be done?'

'I'se find difficul' to ans'er dat 'terrogation, missus,' said the black coachman, grinning. 'Dar's no 'mittance here, dat's sartin. Dey got em fence across as high as nigger's head on de box. I'se beginnin' to think, too, from dat are sound I jist hearn in dat gemman's froat inside, dat he hab de symptom ob cholery, though he vas only tuck sick four mile back. But cholery's quick on de heel, and so am Pompey Slack too, if he make up him mind da dat am de cholery de gemman got!'

'It *is* the cholera, and he must have aid or he will die,' cried the lady with agony in her voice.

Pompey Slack gave a genuine African yell of terror at this announcement, and made one leap from his coach-box to the ground. The barrier, with the villagers standing at a safe distance behind it, was before him, and he made at it, and began to scramble madly over it, shouting at the top of his lungs, 'I'm a dead man! I'm a gone nigger! Cholery hab got Pomp at last!' These were exclamations, combined with what the lady had spoken, and which had been overheard by those within the barrier, that were not likely to be of any very great benefit to the poor terrified coachman. He found himself assailed by shouts and clubs, brick-bats and stones, ere he had reached half way to the top timber of the barrier, and was beaten back into the road, and rolled beneath the horses. His proximity to the infected coach inspired him with fresh terror, and leaping the hedge, he fled across the fields towards the river. Instantly there was a hue and cry raised after him, lest he should double and get round into the town, and half the holder people about the barrier followed in pursuit with dogs and guns. Poor Pompey, horrified at the idea that he had caught the cholera by driving his coach with a sick man inside, and put in mortal fear by the shouts and wild pursuit, fled across the meadow, and reaching the river, plunged into it. He soon gained the opposite shore and continued his flight, no longer pursued, until he disappeared in a distant wood far south of the village of Hill-side. His pursuers then retraced their steps, not without apprehensions that he might not yet find his way into their streets, and infect the village. Such was the spirit with which fear and self-preservation inspired whole bodies of citizens in that time of panic and death. Charity, hospitality, love and kindness, were alike forgotten by the Infidel and the Christian; and to 'safety' was sacrificed every thing that ennobles humanity. The hackney coach remained standing without the barrier, the reins fallen beneath the horse's feet, and the moans of illness heard from the carriage window. After satisfying themselves that the wind blew towards the coach, two of the selectmen approached closer to the barrier and shouted to the inmates of the deserted vehicle. The lady put her head out of the window, and with an imploring glance of appeal, looked at them as they peeped through the crevices in the timbers.

'Is that carriage from Boston?' asked Deacon David Ring timidly, yet trying to look composed and dignified as became his position of first magistrate of the town.'

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'Oh, yes, sir!' answered the lady in an agitated voice. My husband and child are within and he has been taken sick within half an hour and will perish at your barrier unless you admit us. You need not come nigh him. I will bear him in my arms to the nearest house if you will send a physician to him! Oh, sir, be merciful, and let not fear overcome pity in your breast!

'We are sorry, very sorry, for you madam, but we must look to our own safety. There are three thousand people in this town, whose lives must not be sacrificed to save that of one or even three. You and your husband and child we commit to Heaven.'

'A drop of water! He thirsts will no one give me a drop of water?'

'Yes I will aid you all I can, lady,' said a young man entering a house, at the corner of which the barrier was constructed, and bringing forth a pitcher of water. Before those near could arrest him he had scaled the barrier and leaped down on the other side.'

'Frederick Orne, thou hast cast thyself forth the town so be the peril on thine own head.' said the selectmen.

'Here, lady, is water' he said kindly, and unheeding the angry murmur of his fellow citizens.

'God bless you, sir, I cannot thank you for you have risked your life to do this charity! Henry, my husband, here is water drink!' she said placing the pitcher to the lips of the gentleman whom the bold young townsman saw was a fine looking man not more than thirty years of age. He was lying back in the coach with a countenance on which the plague had plainly stamped its mark! a lovely little girl not more than seven years old was gently bathing his forehead with her fingers moistened in cologne and at intervals imprinting a kiss upon his lips and whispering words of love and affection.'

'He shall be removed from the coach, lady, if you desire it, and receive every attention. I am not yet a physician but have been long enough a student of medicine to be of some service. There is my mother's house and mine!' he said pointing to the retired cottage by the river side and you shall have shelter there, for it is too remote from the street for your presence to cause alarm. But alarm or not, you and your husband shall have its protection.'

'Noble, generous sir!' said the lady with warmth and eyes filled with tears.

'No thanks! I will take the reins and drive you by yonder gate and through that farm road to my dwelling.'

'We protest against and shall oppose this proceeding,' exclaimed the selectmen from within the barrier, while from the multitude which had gathered round it, proceeded loud murmurs of disapprobation.

Without heeding them young Frederick Orne mounted the box and turning the horses drove rapidly back a quarter of a mile and turning into a gate pursued his way by a circuitous road towards the skirts of the village where stood the cottage. He reached the entrance of the lane by his house just a moment before a party of at least a hundred men, who were approaching with beams, boards, and branches of trees to stop up the passage. When they saw him enter it in advance of them they set up a savage shout and rushed after the carriage with the intention of turning it back, as the foremost came near, the young man looking back and said quietly.

'You forget, sirs, that the pestilence you so much dread is in this carriage, and that the wind blows past it in your direction.'

The men stopped as suddenly as if an impassable gulf had opened before them and he was left to pursue his way to the cottage, which was situated at the extremity of the first cross street, close to the water, and not within three hundred yards of any other dwelling. He knew his mother to be in Lexington that day and before reaching the

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house he called to the only domestic there was, to leave it. He waited a few minutes for this purpose and then drove up to the steps and opened the carriage door. He assisted the invalid into the house and to a bed and rendered him all the aid in his power. But skill and kindness and assiduous nursing and prayers were alike unavailing. At midnight he died!

An hour afterwards the wife was seized with the same fatal symptoms and at sun-rise she lay dead by the side of her husband. The devoted young man after shedding a tear over the early fate of such grace and beauty, such manliness and wedded truth, went out to dig a grave beneath an elm by the river side. He was here discovered by a townsman with the orphan child seated on a moss grown stone by him. The man hailed him from a distance, and learning the death of both the strangers hastened to communicate the intelligence to the civil authorities of the village. Among those who came and stood afar off to watch him labouring digging the grave, were two sextons who had the courage to say, that if he would retire into the house they would approach and complete the grave. Wearied with watching, and his labour, he gladly complied and taking the lonely child by the hand, which clung to him with touching dependence, he left the way open. The two graves were soon dug, and the men hastily retreated, leaving behind two coffins that the town had provided. In a few minutes the young medical student, was seen by all the town gathered on the hill-side coming forth from the cottage bearing in his arms the corpse of the wife, which he placed in one of the coffins by the graves' mouth. He then returned and bore to the spot that of the husband like wise! unassisted, he lowered them into their graves, one after the other, and covered them with earth. He was then observed by the multitude on the hill, half of whom instinctively and reverently imitated his posture, to kneel a few moments by their graves as if in prayer, the orphan child kneeling by his side! He then rose up and walked with a slow, tottering step, which all witnessed, back again to the dwelling and entered it. This was about the hour of noon. The day was firey hot and sultry; the dust that was disturbed and rose in the dry tremulous atmosphere floated therein and fell not again to the ground. The presence of the plague in that solitary cottage, had depeopled the village at early dawn. Congregated on the hill-side, about the church, the alarmed villagers had been grouped half the day, watching their deserted streets and smokeless fire-sides, yet fearing to return even when the `dead of the Plague' were buried. A whisper went through the multitude, that the tottering step of the brave and philanthropic medical student, was an indication that the disease had fastened upon him. Hour after hour they watched the dwelling for any signs of life. At length the suspense, and with their long expulsion from their homes, became no longer endurable, and it was resolved by some of the more hardy to take measures to ascertain the fate of Frederick Orne, and know certainly if the plague was still in the village. The venerable clergyman who had been absent in a neighbouring parish and had hastened home on receiving intelligence of what had occurred suddenly made his appearance in the midst. He told them that *his* duty called him by the side of the sick and dying and that he would go and learn the fate of his youthful parishoner.

To this all voices rose in loud and affectionate opposition. `Who will stand in your place to us, if you perish?' said they. `Nay let us go,' cried the two men who had volunteered; `we, who have no ties, and who can be spared; for those who enter yonder dwelling cannot again mingle with their fellow-townsmen.'

At this crisis there was a loud cry from a group of lads, who were gazing towards the house with looks of awe and fear, and all eyes were turned in the direction in which they were looking.

`It is the child!' cried a hundred voices. `She is alone, and is flying hither.'

`He is dead then,' said the rector solemnly.

A shudder passed through the crowd, and the course of the little girl was watched with an eager anxiety, that can only be conceived by those who have been a witness to the panic and terror of the `cholera season.' A few moments made manifest the intention of the child.

`She is coming into the village, and perhaps up here among us,' exclaimed the voice of Deacon David Ring, the chief selectman.

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His words produced an extraordinary effect upon the multitude already deeply excited. A wild startling outcry came from its midst, echoed by a hundred voices, and with a simultaneous movement like waves breaking over their natural barriers they poured over the walls of the church-yard, and fled tumultuously up the height. The clergyman, his son Eustace, and two or three others only remained firm to watch the progress of the child. It came running rapidly up the lane now concealed by the trees, now again visible in an open space until they saw her enter the main street of the village. Through this she ran with her curly bright hair streaming in the wind of her rapid motion, and her little arms extended towards the hill, as if supplicating protection. Poor orphan; there were few hearts there that beat kindly for thee. Self and love of life predominated in all breasts, and fear hath made thee a monitor to fly from. In another moment she would have reached the path which led up to the church-hill, when from the stable of the village inn, a black man was seen to come out and approach her. It was the coachman who had fled the day before to the woods, and who had, probably, in the night crept back to the village and found shelter in the stable. His fears of the plague, evidently no longer influenced him, as it had not seized upon him as he had feared; for he immediately caught the child by the hand and seemed to address it. She yielded instantly to his guidance, and he led her to the portico of the tavern, sat down by her and brought her water. All this was seen from the hill.

‘Plague or no plague; I am ruined after this,’ groaned Ben Power the fat landlord of the ‘Gen. Warren Inn,’ stopping half-way up the hill to breathe himself. ‘It will take a twelve month to purify my house. I wish that nigger had been six feet under ground.’

‘Yet, if he had not stopped the child, she would have been among us,’ answered another. ‘I think it a God’s mercy. There! the child has it now.’

‘See! he has taken it in his arms and carried it into the house,’ cried several voices with alarm.

‘The Cholera is fairly in Hill-side,’ said Deacon Ring, and each man must take care of himself.’

‘Nay,’ said the clergyman, ‘we must look to Heaven. The hand that directs the arrow, has power to turn it aside. Let the bell be tolled and the people be gathered in the church, and we will supplicate the Divine mercy.’

They cannot all enter the church, the multitude being so great,’ said the ruler of the village council.

‘Then assemble them on the green here, and in the church-yard. I will go to my study a few moments in the rectory across the lawn, and prepare myself for the occasion. In the meanwhile let there be found four young men who will visit the cottage and bury the dead body of Frederick Orne, if, as I doubt not, he lies dead there of the plague. They must be fearless and faithful, and willing afterwards to withhold themselves from all intercourse with the village, till Heaven’s anger be passed by. The dead must be buried even at the risk of the living, for if the body lie three days above ground, the whole air will be charged with pestilence and death.

The words of the venerable man were heard by many near, and it was soon whispered fearfully among the people, that some must risk life to bury the dead, in order to save the whole air from infection. The announcement as it flew from lip to lip, left every cheek pale and every heart throbbing with strange dread. Each man looked upon his fellow man with a wistful eye, yet turned away his look when himself was the wistful object of another’s scrutiny. They had been once more drawn together by the solemn tolling of the bell from the tower, and a deep silence hung over the pale throng. All at once there was a movement on the skirts of the crowd, and a young man passed through it and stood in the midst, and said in a quiet, resolute tone of voice,

‘I am ready.’

A murmur of admiration a deep sigh of relief from the multitude followed this bold act.

'I *too* am ready,' answered another youth, placing himself by Eustace Forrest.

'And we make the four,' said two brothers, advancing and placing themselves by the two others.

A suppressed shout, mingled with which was heard the cry of a mother's agony, rose from the throng, and every eye was turned upon the young men, as upon the preservers of their lives. But some gazed upon them with pity, when they thought of their danger and reflected how soon they might be numbered with the dead they were to go and bury. Tears were freely poured by loved ones, but none at such a time was so weak as to stay their purpose. They only wept in silence. Still tolled on the tower bell; the sun was sinking low towards the western champaign, and the rector came and stood in the midst of the assembly, to act as their high priest in deprecating the vengeance of the Almighty. Then with his blessing, and the prayers of the vast multitude, went forth the four young men on their mission of charity and sacrifice.

CHAPTER II.

'To *steal* or not to *steal* that is the question.'

The young men took their way at a rapid pace along the path down to the village and entering the silent Main street, were seen a few moments afterwards in the lane leading to the cottage. As they approached the white gate that opened upon a narrow lawn and flower-garden, they saw the hackney coach standing beneath an elm and the horses unharnessed grazing near by. Bent resolutely on their purpose they did not avoid the carriage but passing near it, entered the portico of the dwelling. Eustace stopped a moment to listen all was still, and their worst fears as to the fate of the noble young man were confirmed.

'Let us enter and know the worst,' he said passing into the hall. The door of the parlor was open and Eustace entered it with a slow and noiseless tread, with awe at his heart. Stretched on a sofa with a pillow beneath his head, lay the dead, unsightly body of Frederick Orne. From the appearance life had been extinct several hours. The face was black, and the room was tainted and deadly. By the side of the pillow was a low chair, in which the child had evidently sat to watch by him until he died? and when death came she fled in fear But death was not so hard of heart as the living with whom she would have sought protection.

The young men stood a moment and gazed with horror and commiseration upon the corpse of their late friend and companion.

'Noble fellow!' said Eustace with deep feeling. 'He has sacrificed himself to his benevolence of heart. 'Come, my friends let two of us go out and dig his grave and pay him the last office of friendship and love! Two will go for a coffin, where you will find them in the deserted coffin-maker's shop.'

In half an hour the grave was dug, and the body placed in the coffin by these brave young men. They raised it upon their shoulders and bore it forth from the dwelling. It was now night, and the stars, and the faint lingering glow of the western horizon, only gave them light. Shadows and darkness and silence were around them. The river flowed by a mournful black flood, rippling and murmuring a requiem! They stopped by its banks, and in silence placed the coffin in a third grave, dug where they had seen him kneel by the side of that of the strangers! Eustace then read the service for the dead, and they returned slowly to the house.

'Now, my friends, we have another duty to perform. I received the orders from my father as I parted with him, as the decision of of the town council.'

He then entered the infected dwelling and returned with a lighted torch.

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At the sight of this, a deep murmur of voices reached their ears from the hill side, where in the darkness of night, were still assembled the congregated people. The murmuring soon rose to a shout that awoke the echoes of the river banks, and filled all the air, like the sweeping by of a tempest. The motion of the torch was watched with intense interest, and they saw it multiply into four! Every eye was bent upon the movements of each torch-bearer, and in a few seconds four jets of flames were seen simultaneously to shoot upward from the four corners of the House of the Plague! Again a shout filled the valley, and then all was silent. Rapidly the flames curled up the sides, and darted along the eaves like four serpents of fire, and entwining on the roof, rose high in the still air, crackling and flashing, and casting far and wide over river and field, village and height, a baleful glare. In strange awe the multitude watched the progress of the consuming fire. No word was spoken! no sound but that of deep suppressed breathing, and the lashing roar of the flames, was heard till the smouldering ruins fell suddenly in together in a mass, and a dark cloud ignited by a mile lion of flying sparks, poured from the fierce crater, in the place of the late brilliant flame, and falling low around it hung over the spot like a pall!

Minutes passed, and yet no voice had broken the strange silence that reigned. They remained gazing upon the scenes of ruin with a sort of fascination. At length the venerable rector spoke. His clear voice, though low in its tones, sounded like a trumpet to their ears, so profoundly were their hearts buried in the silence.

'Now hath the plague been stayed, and the town purified by fire. The four young men, whom Heaven defend! will remain on the island in the river, until all fear of contagion is passed. Provisions must be sent down to them, by the current! Return now, my friends, to your homes, and let each man hasten to purify himself from the plague of sin, and humble himself before God, lest the fires of his vengeance consume him, as we have this night consumed the House of the Plague.'

'But the child!' said the landlord of the inn, doubtfully.

'There is no proof that it has taken the plague. If God has spared it a day and night, and taken the others, he will perhaps yet spare it I will first return into the village, and will see this orphan, and know if it be well, and free from the plague.'

'But the black,' said the quavering voice of Deacon Ring.

'He also cannot have the disease, or he would have died with it. Let us not fear, but have courage Heaven may be satisfied with what has been sacrificed, and spare us. But let proper precaution be taken. Remain you here, while I go into the village.'

To this step there was a strong and determined objection, raised by every voice, when mine host of the 'Gen. Warren' taking courage in his heart, said he would himself go and look after his own house. With this determination, he hastened on in advance of the rector, and the crowd of following towns-people, and was soon out of sight, in the darkness of the shadow of the trees. On reaching the street in front of his inn, he felt his heart fail him; for Ben Power loved life, and good cheer, and would have been satisfied to live and keep the General Warren for the accommodation of the next seven generations. He did not like coffins, graves, and such dull matters, and was never known to speak of them without washing down the words with a stiff brandy sling or some other stout potation. But though he loved life he did not let his fears of dying destroy the native goodness of his temper, and the kindly feeling of his nature. He had risked life to save the lives of persons endangered by a boat upsetting, or a carriage run-away with, and he felt that he could now do so again! But there was, it must be confessed a reluctance felt by our host, to be taken off by the cholera. The very idea of this pestilence, conveyed a thousand horrid deaths to every mind! The idea of death in other forms, seemed endurable to people, compared with this; and happy were they esteemed who died quietly of an honest fever, before the cholera seized upon them. Captain Ben, (for whoever knew an innkeeper without a military title?) was especially of this way of thinking. But the little girl's lonely situation, had taken hold of his better nature, and her pitiful orphan-hood silently appealed to his benevolence.

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A light in his back sitting-room, now drew his attention, and strengthening his resolution by calling in the aid of humanity, he boldly walked across the street to his house, and stood on the threshold.

'Ho, blackee! what's the news, hey?' he called without entering; for Ben could not quite overcome his fears; as was also evident by his diligently cramming his nostrils with snuff, and renewing his quid of pigstail.

'Ah, bress your soul, massa, am you dar!' answered the negro coming out of the back room with a light; 'I'se tink I corporation an' mayor, and poppilation ob dis 'spectable town! Dont you knows I, Mass' Power, when I drive gemman's out to your house so of en?'

'Yes, yes, I know you now, Pomp; but d n you, keep your distance;' he said in some trepidation, and retreating a step, 'keep off! But you dont look pale you an't got it yet, have you?'

'Yah, yah! dey looks brack dem Cholera fokes do, mass' Ben, not pale, when it gripe hold on em.'

'But I did not know but a nigger might grow pale, you know Pomp,' answered Captain Ben with a smile. 'But how is the child?'

'She sleeps now, boss,' peeping over his shoulder in at the door, to see if the fact sustained his assertion.

'Is she sick? Has she got it? We saw you carry her in.'

'No she on'y tired and ask to sleep den! Poor chil'! she too pretty to hab de black Cholera! She no catch um, mass' Ben! children `scape most always Its de big sinners dat cotch 'em?'

'Then you must be very innocent, Pomp, to escape as you have so far.'

'I vas scared last night when I found I had de case ob cholery in de coach, and I cut stick as if de debble vos arter me with a pitch fork! But when I gets in the bushes and finds myself safe I reflects on my inmost life, boss, and how niggers never yet cotch em from white folks, on'y from anodder nigger! So I says an amen prayer, and a bit ob catechis' and comes back to look arter my horses. I soon finds em, and unharness em, and let em eat grass; and then I comes here in your stable, boss, and takes a nap. When I wakes up, it was afternoon; nebber nigger 'fore sleep so! and den em little girl comes along, and I takes pity on her, and she tell me how her fader and moder die, and a young gemman cotch it and die, and den she cry herself to sleep.'

'You are sure she has'nt got it, then, Pomp?'

'Sartain sure, boss; no more got him den me! If I'm cotched, I'se not inform'd ob it by any pursymshuns,' replied the black with a learned look, and an emphasis, upon the last word, which rightly interpreted probably stood for 'symptoms.'

'I will then go in and see her,' said captain Ben with confidence; and following the black, he entered the room.

The child lay upon the outside of a low bed, with its cheek in its hand, and its pale tear-full face shadowed with bright curls. He gazed upon her a moment or two, as she slept in her innocence and beauty, and then said emphatically.

'We are all brutes to fear evil from this angel, and to fly from her as we have done, like sheep before a wolf. You shall find a friend in me, pretty one. I will be a father to you.'

At this instant the child as if disturbed by his word, partly lifted the lids of her eye, and whispered 'dear father.'

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The words went to the bottom of the large, generous heart of mine host, and brushing a tear from his cheek, he bent softly over the child and kissed its fair white brow. He then went to the door and seeing a man who had ventured to approach as near as the other side of the street, he told him all was safe, that the child and black had both miraculously escaped infection. This intelligence was immediately communicated by the man to the people who were cautiously advancing from the hill side, and was received with a loud shout of rejoicing. In a few minutes a rushing sound and the tramp of hundreds of feet were heard entering the village; and soon the populace, so many hours exiled from their homes, began to re occupy them. Lights one after another rapidly appeared in the darkened windows, and a strange, busy sound of voices was every where heard. Those who occupied dwellings near the Inn, were last to occupy them, and then only with anxiety. The Inn itself was left deserted, not a footstep crossing its longworn threshold, or lingering near it, save that of the ostler who ventured to enter his stable. The family of mine host, his servants and guests, contented themselves with quartering upon their neighbors, till there was positive certainty, that no danger could result from the presence of the negro, and the stranger child.

‘Let them take care of themselves, if they choose, Pomp,’ said the Captain; ‘you and I have done our duty. If we are to suffer by it, we suffer and God have mercy on us! But I do not fear. Come, good friend, take a stiff horn of this old brandy; it will do you good, and keep out the plague. I always find it a remedy for all aches? Here’s your health, Pomp, and that of the poor child in the room there,’

‘Tank ‘ee, boss; furs’ for myself and secon’ place for de chil,’ said the black, bowing and making a scrape with his left leg, ‘you see, boss, I takes a likin’ to this chil,’ seein’ as how its kind o’ under my pertectum. Coz you see, I had de fader and moder and *it* for my fare down, and dey was all three under my purticklar purtectum. Now mass’ Cholery hab cotch dem and kill ‘em, it stan’s to reason, boss, dat de chil’ vot vas leffum darein in dese circumstans, am under my care. So I’se very much oblige to you, mass’ Power for drinking um healt.’

‘What is the child’s name? and where did you take up the parents? and where were you going? and ’

‘Jiss luffum *dere*, mass’ Ben!’ cried Pompey emphatically; ‘how debble nigger answer ‘secutively all dem ‘terogatorums! one ‘qui rum at de time, boss, and den nigger reply wid compressiveness to your understandum. In de fuss place you ‘terrogaate me vid dis ‘quirum; what am de chil’s name?’

‘Yes, Pompey,’ said mine host adding a little more water to the sugar in the bottom of his glass.

‘Well, dat am a piece of information I hab to guess at,’ answered Pompey gravely, at the same time, after mine host’s example adding a little water to the sugar in his own tumbler.

‘How can you guess at a name, if you dont know it?’ asked Captain Ben taking the decanter and adding a little and then a little more brandy to the water he had added to the sugar.

‘Coz,’ answered the black stretching forth his hand and taking up the decanter mine host had set down again; ‘you see fuss place, I’se good at guessin’ nat’rally, and secon’ place I hear em call her ‘Fan,’ which is persumptum evidence dat her name am Fanny;’ and Pompy added at least two fingers of Cogniac to the water in his glass.

‘That is very clear, Pompey, Fanny must be her name. Here’s to the pretty little Fanny!’ drinking off his sling.

‘Here am to de same, savin’ your health, boss,’ answered Pompey pouring the contents of the tumbler down the capacious orifice of his throat. ‘Bressed nice liquor you keep, Cap’n Ben, de leavins ob de glass, vid a little water and a drop o’ brandy am jess as good as de fuss drink! now I’m ready for um secon’ terragatorum!’

"Is there no other name that you heard?"

"No. He call her wife, she call him husban' and Henry."

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`Did you never see them before?"

`No, boss. I vos you see all alone on my stan' rubbin down my horses 'xpectin' fare for de carriages am in great demand dese cholery times, ebbery body scamperin' to the country, vhen dis gemman, no, dat dead man, comes up to me and axes me if my coach am tuck by any body. He den say dat he want me to go to um ship at Indium wharf, and tuck him, a lady an chil' (de little one in dar asleep!) and drive twenty miles into de country to de first healthy village, where he could stay till de Cholery was over. He said how he hab just come from England in de ship, and finding de plague was in de city, he wanted to 'scape from it, vithout stoppin a minute in town! He said he would pay me half a guinea a league, and as much for myself back to the city. Says I boss, fore pay am sure pay! So he put four gold guineas in my hand.

`He must have been an Englishman,' said mine host,

Dat am dis nigger's 'pinion; coz I nebber hab fare dat pay me in yellow boys, but dey am Englishum. So I takes him in and drive down to de ship and takes 'em wid a trunk, he sayin' he hab leff his odder baggage at de custom house.'

`Did the gentleman look sick?'

`No only he seemed terrible 'fraid to stay in de city, for fifty died de day afore, and coffins vas thicker in de streets dan coaches. I drove out o'town across Craige's bridge and when he gets into de country, and saw de green fields, and breathes de pure at mospheerum, he vos cheerful as a bird and he axed me vot um Colleges vos, and de churches and them likes; and I vos willing to answer all his 'quirums wid pleasure, coz he vas civil and soft spoken like a born gemman. Well I tuck the pike to this village, boss, as I knew um road, and know'd how comfortable dey would find demselves in your house, Capt'n Ben.'

`Your glass is empty, Pompey. Fill it again and let us drink to their memory 'said mine host with a gratified look.
`Poor people!'

`Yes, mass Ben! I'se pity 'em. He took ill about five miles from here, and when de lady discover it, she put her head out ob de coach vinder and tell me to drive as fast as I could. I din't drive fast enough for her, and he grew sicker; and so she guved me a guinea, and told me not to spare um horses. So I put on um lash and came on all flying, until yur timber wall brought me up all standin'! Den I tuck to my heels sudden, didnt I, boss. But dont mention um! I'se redeem my reputatium now: ki! but I beat de whole poppulation, boss!'

`You run like a hare, Pomp, there is no mistake. And this is all you know about them or the child?' asked mine host with a look and voice of serious interest.

`Yes, boss, answered Pompey

`The child is truly an orphan and a stranger. There was a trunk, you say. That may contain some evidence of her name and parentage, and may guide us where to send her. Go for it, Pompey, now. I will remain with the child. Ah! perhaps she is old enough to give us information when she wakes.

Pompey soon returned from the lawn of the smouldering ruin, bearing the trunk and some articles in his hand, a reticule and book and mantle, reporting that he had searched the carriage for any thing they might have had with them. These latter conveyed no further intelligence to him. Whatever papers or jewels they had about their persons was now beyond reach, as they had been burried in their clothes! And who would dare dishume `The Dead of the Plague!' The trunk was now opened with a key found in the reticule, and examined. It contained several changes of apparel for a gentleman and lady, and abundant clothing for the child. It was all rich though plain in its mode, and fully proved that the deceased moved in genteel society. There was neither letter nor paper,

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nor a card, to indicate the name. He bethought himself of the linen, and examined it for a mark. His was marked with the initials H. L. The lady's handkerchiefs with F. L.; the little girl's dresses with the name, done in a beautiful stitch, of `Fanny.' The lock of the trunk was then examined, and on a plate was found engraved `H. H., England,' which the honest Ben Power took to be the initials of the lady's maiden name.

Beyond this all was involved in mystery. Once more mine host went over the examination of the trunk and every thing in it, but no further light was thrown upon the subject of their investigation.

`I see how it is, Pompey,' he said, after carefully replacing all the articles in the trunk and relocking it.

`Providence has placed this child under my charge, and I shall accept it till I can find out her friends; for she must have relations somewhere, either in this country or in England. She comes to me without money, though doubtless they had money; but death and flame, and the grave have forever sealed all secrets connected with the House of the Plague! Doubtless what was not buried with them is consumed. I am poor, but I can bring her up. But I shall go in to Boston when the cholera disappears and find out the ship that brought them over. Do you remember her name?'

`No, boss, I'se nebber go on um back end to see, coz you knows I hab no anticipatium ob sich a catastrophum as dis.'

`I shall make every inquiry, Pomp; and in the end, if all intelligence fail me, I shall give her *my* name, unless she can tell me her own, which it is likely she can. Listen! did you not hear her call?'

`Dat am her, sure 'nuff, boss,' said Pompey, following the captain from the bar into the little chamber. The child was sitting up in bed, and looking with fear and surprise around her.

`Poor child!' said Ben to himself. `Do you want any thing, my sweet bird,' he asked as tenderly in voice and epithet as he could, fearing to terrify her.

`My mother! my father! Where are they?'

`Don't think ob dem jiss at dis time, young missus,' said Pompey kindly; `dey is quite 'appy, if you doesn't see em! Don't you know me, wot am de nigger dat druv de car'age?'

`Oh yes,' said the child eagerly; and smiling she put forth her arms towards him.

`That is no English child to take to a darkey so,' said captain Ben, as she clung to Pompey's neck; `if she don't turn out to be Southern born I'm mistaken. An English child, Pomp, would have been frightened at such a blackamoor, while your southern children take to them as kindly as they do to their own mothers, and more so, for that matter.'

`She may be English, boss, and be born in de West Indy, where dey say niggers am plenty as blackberries. Dem is my sentimentums. What am yourn, little beauty?'

`Take me to my father! oh! I have no father I have no mother. I saw them dead I saw them buried in the deep, red ground, and hid from my sight. I saw my friend die, and then I fled away from the dreadful house. My poor mother! my dear, dear father!'

`Don't take on so, pretty child,' said mine host in a husky voice, and soothing her by putting back her rich brown ringlets with his hard hand; `come to me. I will be a father to you: you shall be my child.'

The little girl stopped the expressions of her touching grief, and looking at him steadily in the face with an inquiring gaze, after a moment's observation, turned from him again and patted Pompey on his cheek.

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`No, no, you are not my pa: this is my black pa, now I have no white pa. He was kind to me, and I love him.'

`But I will be kind to you, Fanny,' said captain Ben tenderly.

She started, as if pleased at the sound of her name, and smiled, and then said:

`You too shall be my pa; I will have two pas, a black pa to wait on me, and a white pa to love.

`None but a Southern child would have said that, Pompey. What is your name besides Fanny?'

`Fanny Buck.'

`That is a nick-name.'

`No, sir, father calls me Fanny Buck; but mother calls me Fanny Lark.'

`Ah, I knew it to be a pet name.'

`Oh, my poor pa! dear mother dear father! Is it possible that I am without parents?' she said with sudden and touching pathos.

`No, I will be your father, and my wife will be a mother to you.'

`Is she kind and good as my mother was, sir?'

`I can't say she is all that, dear; but she shall treat you kindly, or I will turn her out of the house.'

`Dere am two sides to a questionum, boss, and de lady sometime hab both; yah, yah, yah!'

`I see you know something of Mrs. Powers, Pomp, you rascal; but I shall rule this time.'

`Dat's right, boss. I'se never guv up to de wimmins, 'special' when dey presume to invade my independum rights and sacriligious privileges. I'se sure rule in my own house whenebber a bressed Providence please to put one ober my head; and if I hab de misfortunum to hab de additionum bressin' ob a wife, I make her *mind* or I break her neck, if she am lubly as um new polished boot, and hab eyes like brackberries stuck in de white ob a boiled egg. Dem's my sentimens pertickerly, boss. Dey say your old woman hab a little bit ob de tartar 'metic in her compositium, mass Ben.'

`The least said about that the better, Pomp,' said mine host; `come to me, dear child. You are to live with me till I can send you to your friends. You have friends?' he said enquiringly, as the child, after looking at him and closely studying a second time his countenance, left the arms of Pompey for his; `where do they live?'

`They are dead, sir! I have no friends but my father and mother; and you know they are buried under the fresh, red earth, with green sods upon their bosoms, where I used to lie and love them. But I cannot lie there again, unless I lie upon the sods that separated me from them; but I can love them, for they are in Heaven. What is death, sir?' and she suddenly fixed her large blue eyes upon his. `I try to think what it is, but I cannot tell what it is, save that it is something dreadful that separates my parents from me.'

`Nay, let us not speak of that now. You must try and sleep again,' said mine host; `in the morning we will talk all this over. Pompey shall sit and watch by you, and you shall have children for company when you wake again.'

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He then placed her upon the pillow, and she was soon asleep again. Leaving the faithful black by her side he then went out to seek his family, and communicate the events of the night. His presence at the houses he visited caused not a little panic, but as he declared the entire absence of disease both from the child and the negro, he was suffered to enter, though none took him by the hand or came in contact with him. He told his wife of his intentions respecting the child, describing her beauty and affectionate nature.

'We have children enough of our own,' answered Mrs. Power, a handsome but bold-looking, managing woman; 'if the child had money it would be different. She shall not be put upon me without I am paid for it. Let her go to the poor house! There's Deacon Ring; he has no children, and he is a selectman; let him take her and bring her up. I mean to have nothing to do with it.'

Such was the reception captain Ben's benevolent intentions met with; but he wisely forebore to insist upon his plan in a neighbor's house, having made up his mind to rule his own when his wife returned to it; which she resolved she would not do as long as the 'cholera child' remained in it. Captain Ben then took his way home alone, whistling 'Bonnie Doon' in an under tone, and deliberately making up his mind for a scene with his better half; in which, however, he as deliberately resolved to come off victor. The streets were now quiet, though lights burned in every house; for, although it was now past midnight, few felt like going to bed.

In the meanwhile, Pompey had kept his station by the side of the sleeping child. It turned in its sleep, and was restless and talking much. While he was watching her and smoothing her pillow, he saw the glitter of gold in the child's bosom. He waited for a moment when she was perfectly quiet, and then softly drew it forth. It was a very small yet singularly beautiful *vinaigrette* of fine gold, with a large topaz set in the lid, with a cypher engraved upon it. The perforated holes to emit the pungent effluvia, and the singular yet not unpleasant smell of it, not a little puzzled Pompey, who had never before seen a *vinaigrette*. After examining it with curiosity, and perplexing his brain with guesses at its use, he came to the sagacious conclusion that it was a charm against the cholera, and that this alone had kept her from taking it.

Pompey was not covetous; he was not dishonest; he had no 'propensitum,' as he would have phrased it, to thieving; but Pompey did love life; he did fear the cholera. There was a moment of hesitation the temptation was great. Life and death seemed at either elbow! the cholera was staring him in the face. He darted a hurried look around to see if 'the captain' was near, then another at the sleeping child, and the jewel disappeared in some unknown receptacle in his garments.

'Whew-w-w!' he breathed long and freely; 'if dis nigger don't feel like a d n tief, den dere am no consciencum in a nigger's carcus. I hab um safe, dat sure, and feel debble like I stole um! But stealin hab two side to him! Dere be dat side when dey steal coz um love to steal dat an't *dis* nigger! dere be, secondlum, dem as steal coz what dey take benefit dem more dan dem dey steal from: dat come pretty near dis perticklar case! Den dar am a third side, and dat am when de cholery come, and nigger bound to take ebbery percaution to sabe um life, take a little trinket from little gal, to keep little while till cholery done killin' fokes, and den gib it safe back to um again. Dem's 'zackly dis 'spectable brack man's case what am here in dis char.'

Pompey's further cogitations were interrupted by the entrance of captain Ben; and the two sat together with a brandy bottle between them, until the dawn broke and the sound of stirring feet was heard in the village streets.

CHAPTER III.

Alas for thy little orphan child, In this cold world so dark and wild! No father's smile; no mother's love! No brother's hand; no sister's kiss, To teach it what affection is! It has no *home* save God's above!

Ten years after the occurrence of the events narrated in the preceding chapter, the glowing sun of a summer's day,

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was once more sending its slanting beams across the vale of Rose-Mead, and lighting up the topmost head of the height behind the village of Hillside. The church spire beneath which, so many years ago, the people had assembled to flee from the pestilence, glittered like a lance of steel in its beams, and a soft, hazy mellow twilight, was gently stealing over the valley, and the river below. The village of Hillside had in the interval of time, undergone but a few changes. The long, Main street, with its neat houses, its umbrageous clms, and pleasant looking inn, remained the same. The cross streets were a little more compact with dwellings, and a mill had gone up by the river-side, at the spot where a group of willows stood, covering the mouth of a creek that emptied into it. The place where had stood the house of the Plague, was occupied by a small and extremely pretty Methodist Chapel; and behind it, under the shadow of some chesnut trees and willows, was a little cemetery, surrounded by a white paling, containing, in its enclosure, three graves. On the island in the river beyond, also, shone a white slab, marking the graves of three young men, who, it read `sacrificed themselves for the lives of their fellow-citizens, by whom this monument is erected with grateful, yet heavy hearts; for to their self-sacrificing devotion the town of Hillside owes its escape from the Pestilence of 1832.'

The streets of the village no longer wore the deserted aspect in which we first beheld them. The old people were seated in chairs before their doors smoking; mechanics were idly talking on their thresholds; children were playing in the streets, with loud and merry voices, for children love most to play in the twilight hours; cows were slowly returning, each to her mistress, from the commons outside the town, where they had been all day grazing; troops of swallows fitted twittering through the air above the houses, darting hither and thither, after the flies that sport in the setting sun-beams; the river went sparkling by, glancing and rippling like the sound of laughter; the soft shadows crept up the hill back of the village towards the blue sky; and the new moon, like the fragment of a broken ring of pale gold, was hanging above the western landscape. All was peace and beauty and confidence in a good Providence. Fear and alarm no longer reigned; and nature smiled peacefully in harmony with the peace at the heart of her children. How beautiful was all this scene. And what time is so affecting to the heart, as the season between the going down of the sun, and the coming out of the stars; when the moon, just balancing between day and evening, neither gives nor withholds her gentle light.

The piazza of the village Inn, held its usual twilight group of grave politicians, smokers and loungers; but for a year past one of their number, the head and front of all their jokes and cheer, had been absent. His leathern arm chair was now occupied by the town school-master; and a grey head-stone of slate, in the church-yard on the hill, told the passing stranger, where lay the remains of `Captain Benjamin Power! this stone being erected by his bereaved and disconsolate wife, to the memory of a beloved husband. ' `Tomb-stones be grave liars,' says a quaint old writer, and in this case the fact bore out the assertion. The widow Power, was doubtless bereaved, but she was very far from being `disconsolate.' Captain Ben had not been two months in his last home, whither love of brandy and dint of scolding, had prematurely sent him, ere it was rumored that the bereaved widow, had set her eyes kindly upon Preceptor Tobitt, the village pedagogue, a bach clor of five and forty, tall and stern, with blue spectacles, a broad brimmed hat, and a stout hickory stick for these three articles named, were as much a part of the man as his nose, hands and feet. He lodged at the `General Warren'; and it was proven beyond doubt, that poor Ben had not been two months cold, ere the warm widow ogled Domine Tobitt at the breakfast table. By degrees as weeks passed on he became more intimate with the hostess, and at length gradually settled himself into the seat at the head of the table. It was then but another natural step to Ben's arm chair on the piazza; and at the end of the year it was an understood thing, that Preceptor Tobitt was to wed, and that very shortly, the gay hostess of the `General Warren Inn.' This was an event in which all the village children were deeply interested; and they of late never said their prayers when they went to bed, but they added a petition for the speedy union of `Master Tobitt;' for a greater tyrant over little boys and girls, had never wielded birch or ruler.

The Domine sat now in his ample arm-chair, which Captain Ben, now dead and gone, had made purposely for the reception of his own ample dimensions. The master had on his broad-brim brown, his blue spectacles, and held his hickory cudgel across his leg, one of which was laid over the other. A short pipe was in his mouth, and a Boston newspaper on his lap. Near him always sat little short Johnny Stringer, the village chair-maker, who never was known to speak a word, but who was noted for being a rare listener, though he was as deaf as a post. He wore

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a short roundabout, and a straw hat on his large, round, bullet-head winter and summer. Johnny was bald and his pate ever shone like a varnished pumpkin. His legs were duck-legs, and like a little boy's, reaching only to the round of his chair. Domine Tobitt was gratified by his devotion, and looked upon him as a sort of protege: and always protected him when his tall, raw-boned wife came to the tavern to bring him home; so that there existed an unhealable feud between the Domine and Mrs. Johnny Stringer. Johnny thought there was no body on the earth so great a man as the Domine, and it was pleasant and gratifying to observe the awful attention with which he listened to the Domine's communication, as if he understood every word of it, and was drinking in the wisdom of Solomon. On the Domine's left always sat, and now sat, the village barber, Tony Taft, a little man of mettle, and blessed by Providence with a marvellous talking tongue. At every few words spoken by the Domine Tony would put in, and be instantly checked by a frowning look of the `Master;' and this he did every seven or nine words, and thus was he frowned silent by the Domine, by the hour at the time: save that the Domine, losing all patience would sometimes come at a full stop in his discourse, and pointing at Johnny with his finger, would say to Tony,

`Sir, thy tongue hath no rest, and thou no manners. Look at this honest chair-maker! See how he listens and interrupts me not, and take example from him. Thy prate is ever like a parrot's. `Nay, but, Master Tobitt,' this, and `save you, Master Tobitt' that, and `But you mistake there, Master Tobitt,' or `I differ from you herein, good Master Tobitt.' Thus goes thy tongue ever like the discordant accompaniment of a bell-clapper heard in the midst of church music.'

Next to the incorrigible little prating barber, on one end of a high-back bench placed against the railing, and facing the Domine, who was always the centre of the group on the piazza, sat the village blacksmith, in his smutty shirt sleeves, and thick leather apron; a man of rough visage and full of politics and religion, and the stoutest and most obstinate opponent the Master and future host of the General Warren had to deal with. He feared him not as the little barber, he had no awe of him like deaf Johnny. He could make speeches at village caucuses, and had once written a report which was printed in the paper published at the county seat. Therefore John Hammerhead was as much of a great man in his own eyes as Domine Tobitt. The other person of any importance, that remains to be named, was Simpson S. Snip, the tailor; a pale, under-sized man, with long neglected whitish hair about his ears, wearing an old hat, and most shabbily dressed; with needles threaded with black silk and brown thread stuck in his collar; pins innumerable adorned his left cuff; his vest and shirt were open, showing his naked breast; he was without a neckcloth, and without suspenders to his slouching trowsers. His feet were thrust into old slippers, and his hands into his breeches pockets. His seat was upon the railing, where he sat swinging his thin legs, and never failing sharply to rebuke Tony Taft whenever the little barber broke in upon the Domine's discourse, and to silence the blacksmith whenever he interrupted the flow of the Master's wisdom. There was doubtless, deep policy in this position assumed by the tailor; for he was a drunken rogue, and the Master was to be the future host of the Inn. Besides these principal personages who were gathered on the piazza of the `General Warren,' were sundry and divers others who had not yet reached the dignity of a place on a chair or bench in the stoop; these were the village wood-sawyer, an old grey headed negro, who always stopped near the piazza as he went homeward of an evening and seated on his horse, lingered to listen to the politics and gossip of Master Tobitt; the idle ostler, who was waiting for the stage to come in; two or three intemperate, broken down towns-folk, once men of better days, who lived half their time in the vicinity of a tavern and bar-room, and several half grown boys embryo stage drivers and ostlers; with all the rag and bob-tail crew that usually are gathered about the doors of a village tavern on the eve of the coming in of the mail stage. It was altogether a characteristic tavern scene. The air was still, and not a breath moved the leaves of the tall wide-spreading elms that stood before the Inn, and cast a soft grey twilight on all beneath. The red glow of the sun-light was still visible to those on the piazza shining brightly on the topmost peak of the hill east of the village.

`Do you see, friends, how like a beacon flame that sun-shine looks on that topmost red maple;' said the Domine, who had just ended a political speech with the usual interruptions from Tony Taft; the usual opposition from the sturdy Smith; the usual reproofs touched at both from Simpson S. Snip; and the usual deaf and reverent attention from little Johnny Stringer A beacon is'

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`A beacon is a light-hus,' said Tony quickly. The Domine frowned.

`Dont interrupt the Master,' cried Snip.

`Who does'nt know well enough what a beacon is without going to school,' growled the Smith.

`A beacon is,' continued the Domine, too well used to these interruptions, and too confident in himself to heed them, `a landmark put up on a high hill near the coast, to warn vessels of the vicinity of land.'

`Then its a light house,' said Tony Tafts.

`Hist!' said Snip.

`It is also, says Johnson, a monument, to show where danger has been incurred; but Walker declares it to be only a signal fire kindled on some unusual occasion.'

`There I differ from Mr. Walker, good Master,' said Taft in his quick voice.

`Silence, Mr. Taft,' said the Domine; `you know nothing about it.'

`Stick to your hone and razors, Mr. Taft,' said Snip angrily.

`And you to your needles and shears, Mr. Snip,' retorted Tony fiercely!

`Peace, gentleman!' thundered the Domine bringing down the end of his hickory stick upon the floor with emphasis.

`Nay, Master, if one may not speak at a tavern, he may as well be at church,' said the Smith. `If a man should tell me to stick to my anvil and hammer, as I heard Mr. Snip in a like style address Mr. Taft, I should have given him good as he sent. You are not in school now, good Master.'

`Fie! Mr. Hammerhead;' cried Snip. `Dost thou not know that Master Tobitt is as good as master here.'

`Thou trespassest with too much licence upon domestic matters, Mr. Snip,' answered the Domine, looking red yet not displeased;

`I do not forget I am not now a master in school, honest Hammerhead. ' I would not rule thee nor any man's speech. In a tavern there is full licence for all acts a man may do, save he keep within the law. A tavern is '

`Nay, but good Master Tobitt, there I differ from you. A tavern is '

Here Tony was silenced by a terrible frown from the Domine, and reproved by a sharp `Hist' from the little tailor.

`A tavern is,' continued the Master, `a free place for all men's business or pleasure: Walker calls it `a place where liquors are sold '

`And right good liquors, Dame Power '

`Wilt thou cease interrupting, Tony Taft. Thy tongue cuts in like one of your razors,' cried the Domine, `see this honest man Mr. Stringer; his attention should shame thee, and set the an example for thy guidance.' Here the Master nodded approvingly to Johnny who solemnly nodded in return, and then continued; `but Johnson says it

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is a house for the convenience of travelers.'

'Nay, good Master and for citizens too;' said the Smith; 'for what were a village without an Inn for its citizens. It is the centre of news and business, and is as much benefit to the towns-folk as to the traveler.'

'Nay the Master is right, good Smith;' said Snip.

'Which thou never wert, good tailor,' retorted the blacksmith dryly.

Here arose a laugh at the expense of Snip; and looking needles and shears at the blacksmith, he got off the railing and shuffled into the bar-room.

'I'm glad he's gone,' said Tony Tafts, he's always snappin' a feller up so.'

'And sir, you deserve to be snapped up, for your ill-manners,' said the Domine. 'I cannot speak on any subject but you'

'And the Smith too, Master.'

'Silence! but you as you have just done, must interrupt me. How dost thou do now in church, when the minister preaches?'

'I am always making objections, Master, in my mind, which I dare not speak out.'

'Then make them in thy mind and keep them henceforth, when thou art in my company.'

'But I dont keep them there Master Tobitt; for I always, when the minister comes to be shaved of a Monday mornin's, puts 'em at him, and we al'ays has quite a argument.'

'He is a patient man, and doubtless thou hast, under Heaven, been a main instrument in teaching him this christian virtue. But this is dry talking my friends, so if you will, we will have, at my personal expense, something to drink the person's health; for know ye,' he added smiling grimly, 'to-morrow is to be my wedding day. Fanny, bring glasses, hither.'

At this intelligence the barber cut a caper, the blacksmith slapped his hand into the Domine's palm; and little Johnny the chair-maker, as if comprehending the good news, jumped down from his chair, and kicking it over, flapped his short elbows against his sides and crowed like a cock, this being the little man's usual way of expressing his gratification. The news was received by the hangers on around, with a shout that made the welkin ring. It was soon spread throughout the village, and in ten minutes every little boy, whether up or gone to bed, knew that Master Tobitt's reign was forever over. To anticipate: bonfires were burned in the middle of the street, and some joyous urchins getting into the window of the church, set the bell ringing a merry peal. Never were such rejoicings in anticipation of the marriage of a man so universally hated. It was the rejoicing of freedom, and not for the nuptials. This the Domine felt full clearly: and though he outwardly smiled, he experienced no happiness within. He nevertheless pretended to believe all this joy was for love, and not for hate; and ordering a gallon of rum to be brought to the door, he invited all to pretake freely. His command was obeyed by an exceedingly lovely young girl of sixteen, who putting it down, instantly, and blushing, retreated. His health was boisterously drunk, and also that of the widow, who appeared smiling and nodding at the little parlor window. In the midst of the scene, the Mail Stage came dashing up to the door; the driver flung the mail bag to the ground, with which the Post master's clerk scampered off; the passengers, two in number alighted; and with a loud crack of the whip, the coach whirled with a dashing turn round the corner of the Inn, and disappeared in the stable yard. One of the passengers was a handsome and very elegantly dressed young man; the other was also young and richly dressed,

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but he was a hunchback, and hardly came up to the other's shoulder. They had no other baggage than a carpet bag, and were evidently friends traveling together. The widow was scanning them through the open window as they ascended the steps, when the beautiful face of the young girl appeared behind her, gazing over her shoulder. It caught the eyes of the taller stranger, who startled with surprise and admiration, and stared at her so intently that the beautiful countenance disappeared. The widow who at first took his admiration to herself, finding that his glance shot *over* her, looked round in time to see the maiden retreating.

'What are you doing, you huzzy, peeping out of the window at young men?' she exclaimed in an angry tone, and with a face as red as flame. 'Go into the bar and wash them glasses they have been drinkin' rum out on. You need watching, I see, you lazy thing, and are getting to get above your betters. Next time Dr. Eustace Forrest, or any other Eustace comes telling you you are handsome, I shall send him packing.'

This tirade was uttered in a voice that was not often lowered for any presence, and every word was overheard by the young men as they entered. The young girl, whose pale cheek and downcast eyes showed her to be the victim of domestic tyranny, made no reply; but gently sighing, took her place behind the bar and commenced washing up the tumblers which the ostler had just brought in from the piazza. The taller young man lounged in with a highly fashionable air of ease and indifference, and after slightly glancing at the widow in recognition of her curtesy, and laying down his cloak, he went up to the bar, and in what might be termed a confidential tone of voice, said:

'You can let us have tea, my dear, I suppose.'

'Yes, sir,' she answered, dropping her eyes beneath the free gaze of his dark, admiring glance, and then looking timidly at her Mistress, who instantly said, something sharply:

'I am the landlady, sir.'

'No doubt, ma'm, no doubt,' he answered with immovable indifference, surveying her from head to foot with his eye-glass; 'but I was directing my conversation quite to the young person. You will let us have green tea, dear, dry toast, and, above all, your own charming presence!'

'Fanny, leave them glasses, and go and order tea for the gentlemen,' said the widow sharply, and looking with a most unamiable visage at the young man

The pretty bar-maid instantly disappeared, followed by the eyes of the young man, who, as the door closed, turned to the widow and said with a provoking ease;

'You have a beautiful daughter, ma'm! Dem me if I recollect when I have seen such a face! Her figure is superb; not yet quite developed, but time will finish that.'

'She is not my daughter, sir;' answered widow Power curtly.

'No. You are quite a handsome woman, and must have been a belle in your day; but then I do *not* see any resemblance.'

The widow smiled at the compliment, and answered with her good nature restored:

'She is an orphan that my late dear husband adopted.'

'Ah, a lovely orphan indeed! Who were her parents? Doubtless she is your niece.'

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'No no relation. Her father and mother died here of the cholery ten years ago, and my poor dear husband, who was ever doing foolish things, adopted her, when he ought to have sent her to the poor house.'

'And do you not know who her parents were?' asked the young man with interest.

'No their names could never be discovered. My poor dear husband went up to Boston, where the hackman who drove 'em out said the English ship lay he took them from; but the ship had gone to sea, and was lost the same voyage; and so nothing could ever be heard from them.'

'And did they arrive at Boston as emigrants, in an English ship?'

'They wasn't emigrants, I don't think,' she answered, lowering her voice; 'but were passengers, as their clothes and looks showed them to be genteel like. But I don't want her to get such a idea into her head, for she is almost good for nothing now, by the flattery and attention of strangers who stop here.'

'And what is her position in your family?' inquired the deformed young man in a tone of deep sympathy, for he had listened to the narrative of the hostess with thoughtful attention, his fine intellectual face lighted up with feeling and intelligent interest in the fate of one so young and beautiful.

'Why, I treat her as a daughter,' answered the widow hesitating; 'though you know,' she instantly added, feeling the dark eye of the hunchback reading her heart, 'that one can't feel towards another child, and nobody knows whose, as one can towards one's own! We never had any pay for keepin' her, and so she has to work to help her own livin'.'

Work! yes, to *work*, to *help*, to earn her own living, was the poor child's lot from the day she was left an orphan under the household tyranny of the wife of honest Ben Power. Poor little Fanny! The first few months of thy orphanage were a period of tears, and sorrow, and pain. But the child soon ceased to weep, and to learn to endure! She was the vent of all the anger of the mother, and all the spite of the children, because she was prettier than they. She went to school, for captain Ben was resolute on this point, and carried it; and being a favorite of the master, (not Domine Tobitt,) for her quickness and intelligence, she was envied and disliked by the scholars. Thus she lived till she was in her fifteenth year, when her friend and protector died; and from the day of his funeral Fanny became a slave! Roused at dawn in the morning by a voice of anger, and driven through the day by continual scolding and fault-finding, the poor girl was glad at night to creep to her little bed in the attic over the kitchen, and forget, in sleep, her misery. But in all her servitude she was cheered by pleasant thoughts, like dreams, of a once happier state, when she was loved and was happy, and the hope (she knew not whence it came) that she should once more be happy, buoyed her young heart and kept her from breaking down beneath her tasked life. Where was the venerable minister, Mr. Forrest? Where was the brave Eustace, his son the sole survivor of the four victims who offered their lives for the safety of the whole people? The tomb had seven years before closed over the last remains of the venerable man; and Eustace, now become a physician, practised in the city. The story of the orphan girl had long been known to all, but there was none that took an interest in her fate. And so long as her mistress did not maltreat her person, no one interfered in her behalf, or took notice of her condition. She was known far and near as the pretty bar-maid, for beautiful and lovely she was, in spite of the circumstances in which her life passed.

An event which occurred a few weeks before the present time of our story, served not only to help Fanny to support her hard lot, but to make her condition still more unpleasant. She was crossing the yard from the pump with a heavy tub of water, which she had been commanded by her mistress to fill there and bring into the wash-room as a punishment for some trivial neglect. She had proceeded but two or three steps, staggering beneath the cruel burden, when a young man, who had just alighted from his horse at the trough, ran up to her and said politely, while his eyes rested with eager admiration upon her beautiful face.

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`That is too heavy for you, Miss. Permit me to assist you;' and taking hold of one of the handles of the tub, they carried it together into the porch. Fanny thanked him tremblingly, for she saw the cloud on her mistress's brow.

`It is too heavy a weight for you to attempt to carry again,' he said, gently reproving her; `you will injure yourself for life!'

`It was my orders, sir; and `I thank you not to interfere with my domestics," said the hostess angrily.

`Then you are very unfeeling, madam, to say the least,' answered the young gentleman with a glance of indignation at the fiery visage of the widow. `Did you say she was your domestic?'

`Fanny, what are you doing standing staring at the imperent feller? Go in to your work! In with you!' And with this the virago, after deigning no other reply to the question put her than a glance of angry contempt, followed her in and banged the door in his face.

The young man could not help smiling at her manner; but the next moment his fine thoughtful face assumed a grave expression. He felt his whole sympathy enlisted in behalf of that young and lovely victim of tyranny, and resolved to ascertain her history. His eye at this moment rested on Tony Taft, the barber, who had witnessed the incident, having at that moment come to the pump to take a drink of water at the spout.

`You got a taste, then, sir,' said Tony, who was always ready to volunteer his gossip. `The widder's a keen one!'

The young man at once approached him.

`Do you know the name, my good man, of this pretty maiden?'

`Fanny.'

What else?'

`Nothing. She is an orphan, and her folks, who were emigrants, died in the cholera time, over there in a house where the methodist church stands. Old Captain Ben, the widder's husband that vos, took her and 'dopted her; and now he's dead she leads a life on't. I think it would be a good law, sir, when parents dies and leaves no money, to poison the children too. All them orphans as ever I've seen fared hard. There's mighty little charity for orphans in this world, sir. She's a nice good girl, sir, and a deal handsomer than the pictur of the `Lowell Belle' I've got hanging up in the shop. I'd court her if I dared; but the widder'd soon be in my hair if she 'spected such 'tentions; for I heard her tell her one day she meant to keep her ten years, to work for her, now she was a young woman grown, to pay up for the ten years she has been on her hands, though dear knows, she has had her full ten years' work out o' the poor girl already. You havn't shaved to-day sir; hadn't you better step in, while your horse is breathing himself?'

`Thank you,' said the young gentleman, and followed the communicative barber into his shop, where Tony did not fail to point out to him the colored print of the `Lowell Belle,' and to descant upon the superior attractions of Fanny, with whose charms he evidently was not a little enamored.

`Such beautiful hair, sir,' he continued, as he fastened the towel about the neck of his customer; `it is a good yard long already, and she but seventeen! It is like floss silk, and is so rich and brown. I would give my little finger to dress it! Wouldn't I spend hours about it? Do you shave up on the upper lip, sir?'

`Such a person must be very much exposed to rudeness in such a situation as she is in, remarked the young man, who was amused and yet half vexed to hear a lovely girl, in whom he had taken a warm interest, so freely spoken

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of by a dapper little barber. His remark was interrogative, and though made in an indifferent way, was evidently suggested by a desire to know fully her character.

`Yes; but she is as modest as she is pretty, sir. Not a man about the house or the stables but treats pretty Fanny with respect. There is something about her, sir, that keeps off freedom. Does the razor pull, sir? Besides, there's her mistress keeps her always under her eye, as jealous of her as any man could be of a young wife. No body ever said a rude word to Fanny. Do I shave to suit you, sir?'

`Quite well.'

`Thank you, sir; will you have oil on your hair? Bear's, Macassar, Antique, I have all. No? Let me brush you, sir. Fine broadcloth this! From Boston, sir?'

`No I live not many miles from here.'

`A young lawyer, likely going to attend the courts? Stop, sir, there is a lint on your lappel.'

`No.'

`I think your coat has a leetle smell of medicine. You mout be a young doctor, perhaps. Let me brush your hat, sir.'

`No my father is a physician,' answered the young man pleasantly.

`Perhaps you yourself might be looking to the ministry and are come from Andover to-day. I see you dress in black.'

`No,' answered the young gentleman smiling.

`Then I'm mistaken. A young merchant, perhaps?' persevered the indomitable Tony, who never let a stranger escape without knowing all about him.

`No, I am a student of medicine with my father, going to Boston to attend lectures.'

`I guessed within one of it,' answered Tony with triumph. I knew I couldn't be mistaken in the smell of your coat. Sixpence. Thank you, sir! There's your change.'

`Now I have been so complaisant to you, my good barber, I shall expect you to do me a favor likewise.'

`With the greatest pleasure, sir.'

`I have taken a great interest in this young female, and as I know you don't love the widow her mistress '

`But I love *her*,' said Tony energetically.

`No, you only fancy you do. It is pity for her misfortunes that you feel. She would never do for a wife for you; and besides, you never intend to marry.'

`Don't I? Well, perhaps I don't; only I like to think what a pretty wife Fanny would make me.'

`Fancy this picture of the `Lowell Belle' to be her, and that will answer quite as well.'

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`That is a new idea. I believe you are half right.'

`I know I am,' said the young man quietly; `now you must do me a service for giving you this idea. I must speak with this pretty maiden before I ride farther, and you must take a note to her from me, and give it to her privately. There is a dollar. I will bring you the note soon, and you must bring me an answer. Be discreet. I must not be seen, for I have incurred the ire of the old lady.'

`I am afraid of her too,' said Tony, turning pale. `If she should catch me!'

`You are not a fool! You can easily watch your opportunity. I will ride on to the next tavern below, and wait for you. Where can I find pen and paper?'

`In the Post Office, next door.'

The young man, who was strikingly handsome in person, with a face beaming with intellect, and warming with feeling, and who in the foregoing brief conversation had shown such an instinctive knowledge of man's character, then left the shop.

`Strap my nose on a grindstone, but I am gettin' myself into a scrape! He knows me better than I do myself. There's no resisting him. He could turn me round on his finger just as he chooses, I see that. Well, I am glad that pretty Fanny has got a friend. I'll help him, d n me if I don't. But I feel shy of the widder! How shall I get the note to her? A dollar! sixteen shaves! That's a good day's job. I'll do it! I have wit. Tony Taft is no fool, as the gentleman saw and asserted. I can find a way of seeing pretty Fanny alone. Lather my eyebrows, but we'll come round the widder, and then wont there be fun, if I an't caught in the scrape. Let me think how I shall go to work.'

With these words Tony threw himself into his shaving chair, put his hands to his low forehead, compressed his lips, and looked as if he thought desperately hard upon the subject, while in the shallow vanity of his thin mind he was only thinking how he was looking thinking! In a few moments the young man re-entered with a note, and gave it to him; and after reiterating his instructions he went out and mounting his horse galloped rapidly down the street.

CHAPTER IV.

`No crown of gold was e'er so fair As the amber richness of her hair.' `Ne'er was woman yet this side of seventy, Who did not think she had some charm of twenty.'

When the young student reached the Inn farther down the village street, he asked to be shown to a room; and ordering pen and writing paper, he gave instructions to the polite host of the `White Horse' to have any one who should call for him to be sent to his chamber. He then locked his door and sat down at a table to write. The curtain of the low window was partly drawn and the light fell upon his face and person. He was a young man about twenty-five, with an agreeable figure, and was well dressed in a plain suit of black. His hair was soft and of a dark brown hue and carelessly shaded a fair high forehead, the seat of intellect and of thought. His face was handsome, and expressive with intelligence and feeling. His eyes were dark and thoughtful, and shaded with long lashes like those of a woman; yet they were full of a proud fire that indicated a manly mind. On his hand, in which rested his cheek, and which was half-buried in his wavy locks for a moment, glittered a signet ring of great beauty. His mouth and chin were finely formed; nay, his profile was faultless as it was visible, turned to the light, while he sat with his pen in his hand, deliberating before writing. At length, with a glowing cheek and a look of animation lighting his fine countenance, he commenced writing.

Village of Hillside, – *Sept. 7, 1843.* My dear Mother:

Fanny H-----; or, The Hunchback and the Roue

I have at last seen the ideal of all that my most glowing fancy has pictured, woman! I have within the half hour, beheld the realization of all the beautiful creations of my imagination, when I have loved to conceive in my thoughts, the beautiful, the true and the good in *one!* Such a face as has ever appeared in my happiest dreams of boyhood, when forms of love and beauty would float around me; and when I heard her speak the tones were familiar, like the voices of the beautiful ones who have spoken to me in my hours of fancy! But you are full of curiosity to know who I have seen! That I cannot tell, for her history is a mystery. She is an *orphan*. I saw her in the yard of the Inn in this village, as I alighted from my horse! Her beauty and grace, had an effect upon me that was irresistible! You well know, dear, good mother, that I am not susceptible, and that few females have drawn from me expressions of admiration! you know I am not easily impressable by *mere* female loveliness.' She was conveying a burden, all too weighty for her strength, and I tendered my assistance, which she thanked me for with a sweet, yet timid, gratitude that went to my heart. Her mistress, the hostess, observed the act and my sympathy, and poured upon me a torrent of invectives, saying the cruel task was imposed upon the maiden by her orders! She was a virago, and I saw was a tyrant. My heart bled for the young girl; and of one near by I inquired her history. He told me that her parents had arrived from England during the cholera season, and had died in the village; when the landlord of the Inn, now dead, had adopted her; but that since his decease the widow had made a servant of her. He said the parents were evidently very genteel people, but that no one knew their names, and that the child only went by that of 'Fanny.'

You know enough of me, dear mother, to be aware that such a case would deeply enlist my feelings, even were there no beauty of person. But, united as it is with the most exquisite loveliness, and that loveliness, the just personification of my own creations of the beautiful, I need not tell you how much I became interested in her fate. In a word, when satisfied that she was the victim of domestic tyranny, and subjected to the most degrading servitude, and having learned that she was as modest as she was lovely, and by her sweet deportment commanded the respect even of the base and designing, I resolved not to go on my journey until I had spoken with her. For this purpose I engaged the worthy, simple man who had given me the information about her, to convey to her a note; for the expression of gratitude, she gave me for my assistance, while it was mingled with fear of the displeasure of her mistress, gave me confidence that she would not refuse; for, poor child, the voice of friendship and kindness seldom fell upon her heart. This is what I wrote:

'The writer is actuated by no improper motives: or idle curiosity. He sees you are unhappy and in a condition evidently beneath your birth. It was his happiness to offer you a trivial service to-day and from what he then witnessed he is prompted to make further proffer of his friendship and assistance! Your history is known to him, and it would afford him no little gratification to be the instrument of releasing you from a cruel tyranny and contributing to your happiness so far as may lie in his power. The object of this note is to beg you will give him an opportunity of speaking with you a few moments alone! Do not be alarmed at this proposition. It is made in kindness, and prompted by sympathy. There is a path from the garden of the Inn leading to the river-side. The moon will rise at ten o'clock, when I will be at the end of the walk and remain there till midnight in the hope (pray do not disappoint it!) of seeing you!'

You will smile, and, I fear, shake your head, dear mother, and say I have done a very imprudent thing! I have severely examined my motives of action, and feel that I am doing right! you need not fear for my principles, thanks to your teaching, and ever-guarding love, good mother; nor apprehend that I shall involve myself in an affair of the heart with any one who may prove unworthy of me!

Ever your attached son,

Gardner Sears.

P. S. I shall be in Boston to-morrow, when you will hear from me again.'

Fanny H-----; or, The Hunchback and the Roue

The young man then folded and sealed his letter, and despatching it to the Post Office, walked up and down his room, waiting for the appearance of his coadjutor, Tony Taft.

Tony had left his shop soon after the departure of the young man, with the note stuck secretly in his sleeve. He had never before had such a dangerous business on his hands; for the little barber stood in mortal terror of the widow. Nevertheless he had determined in his mind to carry out the matter as became him, and safely placed the missile in the hands of the 'pretty Fanny.' His shop being at the opposite corner of the Inn yard, he found himself on its piazza before he had fully collected his agitated wits. A glimpse through the window of the widow crossing the bar-room floor, nearly unnerved him, for he imagined she inflicted upon him a look of more than usual unamiability.

'Hones and razors! the widder looks more than common cross,' he said to himself, hesitating at the step; I bet a shave she guesses I'm af'er some'at' for she looked right through me! well, I'll not be frightened at a women's eye if 'tis sharper than a patent razor! sixteen shaves an t got every day in the shape of a round dollar, and as so the young gent seems to be flush and easy, I'll go ahead and see Fanny. I wish I drinked as Snip does and then the old woman would'nt give me such vinegar cross looks, when she sees me here! I'll take a glass o'some'at and that 'll be a kind o'opening for to go upon! Perhaps Fanny will be at the bar! Let me see, what shall I take? Brandy is strong and rum is strong, and all liquors is strong, and I cant go em! Blocks an' vigs I have it. I'll call for a tumbler o'small ginger beer the ginger 'll make me fiery, and set my blood up and I shant fear the widder nor the devil!'

With this desperate intention, the stout little barber entered the Inn and scraped along with his peculiar shuffling gait, into the bar-room. This was an apartment with two windows glazed with seven-by-nine panes of glass, looking towards the street, and a third facing the inn-yard. They were half-shaded by dark-blue paper window curtains, rolled up so as to let the light in from the two lower panes, tied with red tape. Seven or eight white oak chairs with flag bottoms, the work of little Johnny Stringer, were stiffly ranged around the walls; and between the two windows stood a pine table beneath a looking glass, that made hideous visaged monsters of all travelers who ventured to peep into it. The floor was nicely sanded, for Dame Power was a notable neat body. As ornaments to the walls, were black paper profiles of Captain Ben, and sundry aunts and couzins, and a 'mourning piece,' so called; and doubtless with truth, for it was a very mournful affair, with a sheep looking like a lean white cat, represented sitting upon a great spot of gamboge for grass; a woman nine feet tall with one arm five feet long and the other but two and a half feet in length, leaning over what was doubtless intended for a tomb with a weeping willow bonding over it, but which was more like a huge flower pot under a heavy shower of green paint. An inscription showed that all this was the handy work of Dame Power in her maiden days. Opposite the two windows was 'the bar.' This was a short red counter in the shape of a half-moon with a shelf behind containing decanters and glasses. Beneath this shelf was a low sliding door which communicated with the kitchen, so that the Dame could at any time hear any one coming in, and hasten to wait upon them.

This was the room in which Tony Taft found himself. The widow heard his step and he at the same time heard her voice scolding Fanny, which she kept up as she dodged under the shelf and made her appearance in the bar.

'Well, Mr. Taft,' she said coldly, for Dame Power loved none who brought no pennies to her drawer; 'are all the men in Hillside clean shaven that you leave your shop at four o'clock to bring folks away from their work?'

'I comed in, good widder,' answered Tony smiling, and looking blandly, 'to ask you to sell me some'at to drink!'

'To drink, Mr. Taft!' exclaimed the widow staring at him with her hard eyes! 'what is come to town now, that you have got heart to take a dram?'

'I've got a brave heart, and I always had, widder, as else I could'nt handle as boldly as I does sharp razors, and strap 'em on my hands as I does like lightning, sometimes when I gets my ambition up to give the judge or the

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squire a clean shave for Sunday. I have got a heart and a stout 'un, widder, but I don't al'ays let folks know it; for true valorousness lieth in modesty.'

'Well, I am glad to see thy bravery shown forth for once, Mr. Taft. What will you take to drink? nice Cogniac, Jamaica, and West India, all the best!'

'Why, widder, I must begin kindly and not overdo the thing the first time,' replied the barber, surveying with misgiving the dazzling decanters which she placed on the counter.

'Well, here is good whisky that would'nt hurt a sucking baby.'

'So I've hearn, that out west they wean babies on whiskey. But I b'leive this time widder,' added Tony very resolutely and with a certain desperation, 'I'll try a small touch o' your ginger small pop.'

"Small pop! small beer, you mean, man," said Dame Power, laughing; 'well, if you will take this you shall have it! but you must call for ginger pop next time Mr. Taft. We doe'snt keep such a article as ginger small pop.'

'Well, I was mistaken then. Full it right chock widder, for I mean to go the entire figur' this time, and no mistake, if I never drink again! Razors! what a *pop* that was! I thought I vos shot; and if the stopper hant druv smack agen that white cat in the tomb stone pictur and tuck her head off!'

'Cat! white cat I'd have you to know, Tony Taft, that that is a innocent lamb and I did it myself! It shows your ignorance of fine arts and proves you are a simpleton. The cork an't hurt it much, and a little paste on the back side 'll make it whole again!'

'I beg pardon, widder Power,' said Tony deprecatingly, 'I am ignorant of such arts; but a pictur is one thing and natur' is another! now if I had heard that white cat '

'*Cat?*'

'Sheep I mean, widder I begs a thousand pardons 'if I had heard that sheep 'bla' when the cork struck it I'd ha' know'd sure what it was coz it would ha' been natur' speaking; but as I hearn nothing I tuck it to be a cat, coz you see it looks so mortal like one vhenever I sees a cat agen I shall think of little lambs! now, don't be angry, widder, 'stakes is made by the best o' people; as sometimes I have shaved only one side of a customer's face, thinking I had shaved the whole. This is right prime pop, widder! How it makes a fellar's nose tingle Its' got into my eyes and makes you look tea years younger a'ready.'

'You are a foolish man, and there's no use being vexed with you, Mr. Taft,' said the widow, letting her anger evaporate in a blush and smile.

'You are a hand'som woman and there's no use denying it, Mistress Power,' answered Tony stoutly, and ogling her.

'The ginger pop has, I believe, got into your thin brain, man, and fuddled it,' said the widow.

'I feels desp'rate, tha't's poz.'

'I dont know what spirits would do with you, Mr. Taft.'

'There'd be no holdin me in. I should kiss somebody or fight.'

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`Why, Mr. Taft.'

`I would, widder. I feel it in me. Give me another tumbler half full o' the ginger. I an't had enough. Hones and razor straps. lather and beards. Send Fanny here and I'll make love to her.'

`I do believe you are drunk on the pop, fool. What put that girl into your head.'

`Coz, she is so darn'd handsome, like you, widder. I must fall in love with somebody, and I cant with you, coz Master Tobitt's in that chair; so '

`No such nonsense now, Mr. Taft. I never heard the like. If I catch you speaking a word to Fan I'll not let you hear the last of it. You shant have any more pop. Pay for this. Five cents.'

`Five cents. Who cares;' said Tony, turning pale at the amount, yet boldly laying down the dollar Gardner Sears had given him.

`You are rich, Mr. Taft,' said the widow, on whose face the sight of money coming *towards* her, always brought a smile; `you may drink as much as you are a mind to, but you must not talk as you have just done. You may make love to me as much as you choose, but not to my domestic. There's your change.'

The presence of the dollar before his eyes, restored Tony Taft to the recollection of his object in coming into the Inn: for the fumes of the ginger pop had really affected his unaccustomed brain, and made him tipsy for a short time, so as to banish his purpose from his mind. He now began to turn over in his mind, how he should get the note, in his sleeve, to Fanny. He saw her through the sliding door behind the bar, at work in the kitchen, and there seemed to him no way of fulfilling his mission without detection from the sharp eye of the widow, who he feared would read his thoughts. Tony's wits, however, had been brightened by his potations, and his invention was sharper than usual. A lucky thought, as he conceived it to be, flashed, or rather, considering its origin, `popped' into his head. While the widow was putting away the glass and bottle, and wiping the bar counter, his attention had been arrested by Fanny's abundant hair, which though she had attempted to put it up under an old brown handkerchief, yet half of it escaped, and hung about her neck and shoulders in the wildest luxuriance. The thought in Tony's mind was matured by the knowledge of the widow's avarice. He stood a little back from the bar, from where he could plainly see Fanny making bread at a table in the kitchen, and stood so intently and purposely observing her, that he drew the eye of the bustling landlady.

`What are your eyes doing there, Tony Taft, peeping at my girls?' asked the virago: `I should think it was quite time your shop wanted you.'

`I was not looking at Fanny, widder, without a business, a object, ' answered Tony with a look of importance, and coolly returning the ireful glance of Dame Power.

`What business can you have with any body in my kitchen?' she demanded, closing to the little door and hiding Fanny from the barber's eyes.'

`I'll tell you, but let it be between ourselves, widder;' said Tony approaching the bar, and leaning over it and speaking in a confidential tone.

`Well,' answered the Dame, her curiosity aroused by his manner.

`You know I'm a barber, and makes ladies' curls;' observed Tony in a very mysterious voice.

`Yes,' answered the widow eagerly.

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`Fanny has just the hair for my purpose. Do you understand me?'

`Not hardly.'

`It is the prettiest hair I ever saw, and is too pretty for a girl in her place.'

`So I have thought, Mr. Taft,' said the widow, who had got but a half formed notion of what Tony was coming at.

`It will make fifty pairs of curls;' said Tony in a low voice.

`Now I understand you,' answered the dame; `but do you think you are going to get me to give it to you. If it is worth any thing it is worth something in Boston, and I ll be paid for it.'

`So you shall widder,' answered Tony impressively; `it does her no good and only serves as a tem'tation and a vanity.'

`So I have thought before to day, and was only yesterday thinking I'd have it cut off. And now I can get any money by it I'll have it off: for she has cost us enough, and if I should sell *her*, it would be no more than getting my dues.'

`You have done good service to her, widder, that's true.'

`And she no kith nor kin of mine.'

`Nor of no body's else. Well I'll give you, let me see I can afford to pay five cents a curl. I dont get more than two shillin's for a bunch of four, when they'er all wove and set. Its handsome hair as ever natur' made, but you can't get no more for it in Boston, widder; besides you'd have to get a city barber here to clip it.'

`Hush! dont speak so loud. I could do that myself.'

`No, it must be clipped just so long, and in just such a way. I'll give you five cents.'

`There must be a most a hundred curls,' answered the widow, her avaricious eye lighting up. `Let me add. That would come to five dollars. Its a bargain, Mr. Taft!'

`But I would like to count the curls and know just how much I've got to pay, for money's scarce now, and I may have to borry some.'

`Well, you shall have an opportunity, by and by,' answered Dame Power, so full of the idea of making five dollars by the sale of Fanny's beautiful locks that she quite forgot she had forbidden Mr. Taft to speak to her victim.

`There's no time so good as the present, widder `said Tony exhilarated at the probable success of his scheme; though we are not sure that it is not *more* than a `scheme,' and that the barber, in something like a feeling between covetousness, for the hair to make into curls, and a disposition to mar the beauty he could not possess, for the sake of revenge upon his rival, meant to carry out his object. `But will Fanny consent?' he asked doubttingly.

`Consent!' repeated the widow with a look of surprise. `Who is to ask her, I want to know? What I say she does, and that's an end on't. You go through that door into my little sanctus Mr. Taft, and I'll soon have her in there. Five dollars. That is not to be had every day by a lone woman; and the girl will be more humble after it. I've seen her taking care of her hair Sunday's, and felt as I could pull it out of her head. What has she to do with such long hair? There's my Jane, as old as she is, and her hair an't a foot long. Set me up with her. Go in there, and I'll be in

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in a jiffy.'

Tony opened the door by the side of the bar, and entered a little carpeted room a step lower down than the bar, which the widow called her `Sanctus.' It was a snug affair with a chintz covered sofa on one side, and two rocking-chairs, a high mantle piece, ornamented with a china-parrot, two plated candle-sticks, three little painted crockery flower vases, and two conch-shells. The walls were adorned with colored engravings of a sentimental turn, and portraits of `General Warren,' and of Washington, and of Frederick the Great; besides a likeness in fresh oils of the widow, lately done at the expence of, and presented to her by, Domine Tobitt, as a card, stuck in a corner of the yellow painted frame, told all persons who cared to read it. There was a pleasant, subdued light in the room, transmitted through chintz curtains closely drawn; for this was the widow's courting room, and she loved this dreamy light.

Tony looked round the `sanctus' for a chair, but seeing none but the two nice quilted rocking chairs and the sofa, he felt diffident about occupying either of them without a special invitation from the widow. This lady had disappeared from the bar as Tony entered the room, and going up to Fanny, who was preparing biscuits for tea, she said sharply:

`Why don't you keep your hair up under the handkerchief, Miss, when you are making bread?'

`It fell out while I was kneading the dough, and I couldn't put it up with my fingers in the batter,' answered Fanny gently.

`There is a hair on the tray now, you dirty jade,' cried the widow, adroitly throwing one, from her own side curls, into the wooden dish.

`Indeed, Mrs. Power, that is not my hair, for it is fairer than mine,' answered Fanny quietly, yet pale and timid.

`Do you dare to contradict me? You are getting too impudent, huzzy. I will send you to the poor house yet, for you have no claim on me. I shouldn't wonder if you were even honestly born, for nobody knows any thing about you. Don't open your mouth to me, now. I'll have none of your `Mrs. Power.' You shall have your hair cut off, and that I have made up my mind to. I won't have a girl in my kitchen with such long curls, for nothing'll be fit to eat soon. So, come, you must make up your mind to have your hair cut or '

`Oh, I *will* try and keep it underneath the handkerchief, Mrs. Power,' cried Fanny, the tears forcing themselves into her eyes; `but the handkerchief is so small.'

`I did not mean to say *or* keep it up, but, or go to the poor house. One or the other you shall do this very hour.'

`Oh, do not compel me to part with my hair, dear Mrs. Power. Indeed that was not mine. I am very careful; I will not let a single tress escape again. Do forgive me this time. My hair! oh, it would make me miserable to lose it! It is my only comfort!'

`Pride and poverty! What have you to do with fine hair? Cut off it shall be. Taft is in the other room, and it shall be done before them biscuit go into the oven. Come.

The poor girl threw herself at the woman's feet and clasped her knees in eloquent distress. She sobbed, and could not speak.

`Get up, girl; none of this make believe. What are you, that you should have a will of your own? You are altogether too pretty for a servant, and the loss of your hair will do you good. So wipe your fingers and come with me!'

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The beautiful orphan silently rose to her feet, and with a pale countenance and a convulsed heaving of her bosom, followed the widow into the room where Tony Taft was, and from which he had overheard enough to understand the scene between them; and as they entered he came to the magnanimous resolution that he would cut off the widow's head before he touched a lock of Fanny's bright hair. Like a victim, as she truly was, the poor girl followed her mistress into the little parlor, and stood before Tony, now a terrible monster in her eyes, (and feeling so in his own) with her hands crossed before her, and her eyes cast down to the carpet. He thought she looked more like the 'Lowell Belle' than ever, and he repented himself in his heart that he should have been accessory to her beautiful grief; for Tony saw tears on her cheek, and the agitation of her lovely form did not escape his attention.

'Sit *there!*' said the widow, pointing to the rocking chair with a look and tone of authority. 'Are you ready, Mr. Taft?'

Tony was now in the greatest strait for the exercise of his shallow wits in which he had ever found himself. He was resolute in his determination not to clip a tress; yet he was so to manage as neither to offend the widow nor lose the opportunity of giving the note to Fanny. He was puzzled; and the more he cogitated the more difficult his position became. He felt tempted to settle the perplexing affair by at once quitting the 'sanctus' and the inn, and seeking safety in his shop; but the idea of the dame's fierce displeasure checked this impulse.

'Take off your handkerchief,' commanded the widow.

Fanny obeyed, and the cloud of rich chestnut hair that fell around her shoulders like a veil of glory, drew from Tony an exclamation of professional delight. This sight made her still more envious of this fair ornament of her victim's person, and strengthened her determination to deprive her of it; and noting his admiration, she whispered aside to him:

'It is worth full ten dollars, every cent of it.'

Tony nodded acquiescence, and was approaching Fanny, when the poor girl, as if this was her last hope, for what woman, however humble her sphere, loves not to cherish with modest pride, her own bright hair? springing forward, caught him by both hands, and said with touching eloquence:

'Oh, Mr. Taft, you have always been kind; do not be guilty of so cruel a deed.'

'D n if I can stan' this, widder,' said Tony looking at the hostess, whose face was growing black with passion at the resistance of Fanny. 'I wouldn't cut it off, if I was you.'

'It shall be cut off, and close to her head too, if I have to do it myself. I guess there is no law again a mother's cuttin' her girl's hair.'

'But you an't her mother, widder,' answered Tony stoutly.

'Don't talk to me! Take your shears and cut it, accordin' to the bargain. It shall be cut if I have to throw the curls to the hogs instead of sellin' 'em.'

'And have you both been so unfeeling as to bargain together for the sale of my hair?' exclaimed Fanny with a quick colour flashing into her pale cheek. 'Then I will *not* part with it.'

'*Not!*' cried or rather screeched the widow in the astonishment of her indignation, her excitement not a little heightened by the knowledge of her intentions betrayed to her victim; and going up to her she caught her by the shoulders and forced her into the chair. 'Now, Mr. Taft, give me your scissors, and I will do it.'

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'I haven't brought them in with me,' answered the barber between fear and rage at seeing Fanny treated so.

'Then I'll soon find a pair of my own. Stir from that chair, Miss, till I come down stairs and I'll make you repent it to the last day you have to live.'

With this threat the virago opened a door upon a dark stair-way leading from the sanctus to her chamber above, and went up as fast as she could make her bulky person ascend, to bring a pair of scissors. Tony listened till he heard her quick foot fall on the floor overhead, and then in a hurried whisper said:

'Miss Fanny, I'm your friend. Don't fear Tony Taft! The she-devil shant touch your hair if I can help it. Don't thank me. There!' he added eagerly, 'take that!' and he thrust the note into her very bosom. 'Hide it and read it the first chance. It was given me by the young doctor that helped you with the tub. He is your friend, Fanny, and no mistake. Tuck it down out o' the way. That's safe. There she comes again! I wish she'd tumble down and break her neck. Hush! don't fear. You have Tony Taft to stand by you.'

The flat foot and skirt of the widow were now visible on the stairs descending, and Fanny dried her tears, with she knew not what hope of good at her heart, while Tony with two enormous strides, placed himself at the farthest part of the room, and was standing, when she entered, surveying her portrait with very evident admiration.

'Very like, widder! The complect is just yours lilly and rosebud! I al'ays admired your 'plexion, and said 'twas natural as the red and white paint on a London wax doll.'

Who shall say that Tony Taft was not a diplomatist? The widow came down the stairs holding in her hand a huge pair of cloth shears, gaping destruction to Fanny's locks; but the attitude of admiration assumed by Tony, and the 'soft sodder' in his speech, had their effect upon the heart of the woman. Her countenance humanized.

'Yes, they *used* to tell me my complexion was fair once, but time makes great changes in beauty, Mr. Taft.'

'But not in yours, widder. Now I should say, if I'd never seen this portrait afore, it was tuck for a nice young lady of of nineteen!'

'Oh, you flatter, Mr. Taft.'

'No razors and rasps if I do! And if I'd not known *you* was a widder, and I'd seen you in Bosting in the street,' (here he looked tenderly at the mollified dame,) 'I'd ha' sworn you was not a year over twenty, and young lookin' at that. Now see that red in the cheek,' he exclaimed, turning rapturously to the portrait; 'see how bright and shiny the eye is in the pictur! *'Tis* a beauty, widder, *and* no mistake. Well, them is mighty shears; why I could cut off a man's head with 'em.' They are too big, and'll crisp and snaggle the hair. I'll take the job myself, for I know I can argy Fanny into consentin'. I'll have my scissors ground, and you bring her into the shop some evenin' when nobody's there, and I'll do it in proper style. I'll stick to my bargain, widder. But you'll have to wait a while for the pay,' he said whispering to her.

'Not a day,' she answered positively.

'Then the job must wait, widder, till I can get the money.'

'Then it shall wait, before I'll trust, Mr. Taft.'

'Well, each day'll make the hair better. Now don't you go for to spoil my job by clipping it yourself, widder,' continued Tony in the same under tone, 'for the hair is mine, and there's half a dollar in hand, as *clench* money. I'll let you know when I get ready to cut it and pay you the other four and a half.'

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The widow took the money which Tony, well knowing the 'young doctor' would remunerate him doubly, had so liberally advanced: and although she would gladly have had Fanny's locks then shorn, yet the certainty of her soon having it done to personal profit rendered her willing to forego the present pleasure of doing it herself.

'Go to the kitchen,' she now said sharply to Fanny; 'but don't think you are to get off altogether with your love-locks, minx. You may make up your mind to lose them first or last, for off they come, and that ere many days pass over your head.'

Fanny cast a grateful look at Tony, to whose interference she attributed her escape, and with a lighter heart left the room. The widow was disposed to be in quite an agreeable humor with Tony, whom she drew again to the subject of the portrait, which he was not behind hand in bepraising till she finally let him off with a laugh, and 'oh, you naughty flatterer!' as he got down through the gamut of its youthfulness to ten years of age, swearing 'by his beard,' of which he had not three hairs, that it verily looked no older.

CHAPTER V.

'They call me stranger when I laugh
And weep, they know not why,
And say, 'Her heart is far from here,
Beneath another sky.'
'Around me are the forms of earth,
And yet I am alone,
With sights and voices echoing
To others all unknown.'
[My Fanciful Life.

We shall occupy this chapter, also, with the continuation of the narrative of the occurrences affecting Fanny, previous to the arrival of the two young gentlemen at the Inn in the mail-stage, and then proceed in order with our story. Gardner Sears while waiting the appearance of Tony Taft, slowly paced his room in thought, weighing in his mind all the difficulties, in which his romantic interest in the pretty orphan of the Inn might involve him; and overthrowing every objection from propriety and caution, with a recurrence in memory to her beautiful face, as it was upturned to his, in grateful, trembling acknowledgment for the trifling service he had rendered her. This young gentleman was by no means naturally susceptible or impressible touching female beauty. He was an only son, and descended from a very old and dignified colonial family, one of the founder's, of which on his mother's side, having been Lieutenant or Vice-Governor under the crown. His father was a venerable gentleman, and physician of the Old School, who had long since retired from active life, and resided in a handsome country house a few miles north of Hillside. Gardner had been three years before graduated, with a distinguished honor at Harvard University, and though heir expectant to an independent estate, had followed the judicious council of his father, and entered upon the study of the profession which had been in his family for several generations, a sort of heir-loom. He was now on his way to Boston, where he intended remaining until the third course of medical lectures commenced, an attendance upon which would complete his medical studies. In character he was a young gentleman of unblemished morals, and with a mind so sensitively pure, that it would instinctively shrink at any temptation to immorality of thought or action. His intellect was of a high order, and his habits were studious and contemplative. He was a passionate lover of nature, and worshipper of the beautiful and the sublime. He shunned society, not from any misanthropic feeling, but because he found more gratification in books or in nature, than in conversation. He had reached the age of twenty five, without showing preference for any female, or indicating any partiality for their society; yet, in his soul, he was the adorer of images of feminine beauty which he was ever creating, and it was because the reality around him, never came sufficiently near the imaginative, that he withdrew from the one, to commune with the other. We have all in our youth pictured to ourselves faces of perfect loveliness. We have revelled in the ideal, and instinctively sought, with this faultless image of the beautiful, and the true in our minds as a standard, for its embodiment in life. Happy is he who at length finds what he seeks; and, uniting his own beautiful creation, to the creation of God, confesses realized, the perfection his heart hath yearned after.

Gardner Sears had been surrounded with forms of beauty, and the witchery of smiles and voices, and eyes of love had upon his heart no effect. There was in the countenances of his fairest acquaintances, no answering impress to

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the seal of that face divine, which in his creations of the beautiful he had engraven upon his heart. In vain his excellent and wise mother held out to him the advantages of early marriage, and named to him the maiden she thought would make him happiest. His quiet, smiling answer invariably was, 'I have not seen her yet, dear mother.'

The very day before his presence at the Inn, such had been his reply to her. When his eyes first fell on the face of Fanny, he felt the blood leap from his heart to his brain, and then go coursing through his veins like lightning, leaving his cheek pale, and his head swimming with a sort of dreamy delirium of joy and doubt. There was, then, a deeper feeling than mere admiration, that led him, with a throbbing heart, from which a fountain of happiness that had longed for this moment to gush out, came welling up, to approach her and tender his services. There was a deeper feeling, than manifested itself externally, which led him to speak in her defence, and to seek her history from the barber. There was a far deeper feeling at his heart, than was visible in his interview with Tony Taft in the shop, and which led him to forego his journey, and to address her a note desiring an interview. This feeling was one of present happiness, mingled with hope and fear and wonder and gratitude. He had found her; he had seen her; he had spoken with her. The ideal of his heart's being had become a reality. The outlines of his creations of the beautiful, were filled out in the fairest proportions of humanity. His conceptions of the beautiful, and the true were no longer pictures of a fanciful imagination, unreal and intangible, but they were truth.

Such were his meditations, when the shuffling steps of the little barber were heard in the entry, and also his shrill voice, which was ever their restless accompaniment.

'Its the young Doctor I want to see, Curnel, he what come on the handsome bay mare.'

'Oh, aye, Tony. He desired to have you sent up to his room. That's the door at the stair head on the left. But what's the secret?' inquired the prying host, in a whisper.

'Can't I strap a pair of a gent's razors, Curnel and bring 'em to him, without a secret being at the bottom,' answered Tony in a loud tone, which he intended should reach the ears of the young 'Doctor,' and convey to him a favorable impression of his sagacity and prudence.

'So; you have been a long while, my good friend,' said Gardner Sears, as Tony entered and closed the door carefully behind him.

'Them men's noses as could ha' been sooner, when they have women's wits to circumvent, I should like to have 'teen my thumb and finger,' said the barber with an important manner.

'Have you been successful?'

'Why, that depends on the result. I gave the note to pretty Fanny, and she hid it away in her bosom.' Tony then proceeded to detail his interview with the widow, and the persecution of Fanny, and the threat touching her hair, to which Gardner Sears listened with emotion and deep indignation.

'I wouldn't ha' mentioned the hair,' said Tony deprecatingly, as he saw his angry brow and flashing eye, 'but I did'nt see what would come o'it.'

'You have done your part well, my good fellow, and are to be commended for your ingenuity. I do not blame you. There are five dollars. Be discreet and silent. I overheard your reply to the inquisitive host below, and commend your prudence. Return to your shop, and if you receive an answer, do not delay in bringing it to me.'

Tony assured him he would not, and then took his leave.

Fanny H-----; or, The Hunchback and the Roue

'Five dollars! that's, let me cypher it out? that't eighty shaves, without the wear of soap and razors. Clean profit every cent!' he soliloquised as he left the Inn.

'She may not have an opportunity of conveying me any reply, and I shall not expect one,' said Gardner Sears, as the door closed on Tony. 'I will be at the place of meeting, and trust to her meeting me there.'

With this determination, he ordered his horse to be put up, and took up a volume of Willi's 'Pencilings By The Way,' that lay on his table, to pass away the time, until the hour came to proceed to the trysting place by the river-side.

It was with a fluttering heart, and strange emotions agitating her young bosom, that Fanny left the presence of her mistress and returned to her work. She paused a moment to bind securely up her abundant hair, which had so barely escaped the scissors, feeling that she could not be too grateful to the barber for his interference. But her heart sunk as she recalled her mistress' words, that not many days should pass, ere every lock should be cut off.

Tears at her sad lot, forced themselves into her fine eyes, yet there was a twilight of a sweet hope at her heart, that ever kept her at such times from giving way to gloom and depression. Her spirit was naturally buoyant, and not even the tyranny of which she was a victim, could break down her lively temper, or make her utterly miserable. Her voice was sweet and cheerful, and the music in her heart would often break out in the richest melody, as she followed her allotted task; and though many were the punishments she had received from her cruel task-mistress for singing, yet still unconsciously she would warble on, and most sweetly when most sad. Knowing little from books, she studied the thoughts of her own spirit and grew spiritually wise. Shut out by her circumstances from enjoying the world in which she lived (and what was this world? the kitchen of an Inn!) she found a bright and beautiful, and even happy world in her own heart, and there she dwelt. She peopled it with beings all good and lovely, and discoursed with them, upon the sweet intelligences of the inner heaven, and upon the wonders of things invisible, save to the introverted eye of the soul. Birds soared and sang in the serene skies of this better land, and she knew their language by heart, and her songs were but the echoes of theirs. God, she found the light of this inner world of her heart; and the revelation of Himself had been to her in Love; and so she was happy and ever at peace. The beauty of her character was its artlessness. Those who live much in their own thoughts, are ever natural. He who loves the world within, will have the spirit of a child. The heart is the true world of childhood! and blessed is he who in manhood so loves to remain therein, that he sends forth no restless dove into the agitated waters of life seeking a new Earth. Fanny was a simple, pure child to the world; for her heart had not followed on after the years of her life in their annual orbit; but, silently moving in its lesser circle, remained a never-setting star within the pure heaven of her childhood's world.

The note she had so privately received, now filled her thoughts with strange agitation. The words of the giver that it came from the young gentleman who had assisted her, singularly troubled her. New feelings stirred within. Fear and hope and trembling joy. Yet fear was strongest. The note had been forced upon her and instinctively concealed before she could reflect. Reflection now came. What should she do with it. She felt as if it became her to return it to the barber without delay. Then she thought of the young man, of his tones of sympathy; of his deep look of tender yet respectful admiration; of his noble and generous defence of her. She trembled and sought in her bosom for the note. The touch thrilled to her heart, and with blushing timidly she withdrew her hand, and the half-formed wish, that she knew *what* it contained, rose in her mind. Fanny was modest and instinctively shrank from any imprudence that might compromise her maiden delicacy. She thought and thought, as she pursued her labor, and the more she thought, the stronger were the arguments gratitude presented for retaining and examining the note, and the weaker grew her resolutions to return it unopened. At length the idea that it would not be generous, to treat thus a stranger who had spoken so kindly to her, and in her behalf, had risked the wrath of her mistress, turned the scale in his favor, and she resolved to take the first opportunity to read the note. Had curiosity nothing to do with it?

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Now that Fanny had come to this resolution, she was impatient to find a way of carrying her decision into effect. How should she escape the Argus-eyes of her mistress, which were ever over her, and measured out and took note of every moment of her time. For half an hour she could think of nothing but the note hid in her bosom. She had nearly let the biscuits burn, and had begun to make tea in the coffee-pot; but fortunately bethought herself in time to avoid these accidents of absence of mind. At length tea was ready, and she hoped to get an opportunity to read it while the widow was at the table. But this chance did not favor her, and darkness came ere she was able even to look at the outside of the note, without fear of detection. At length the hour of retiring to her little chamber over the kitchen came, and she found herself forced to go to bed, without knowing the contents of the note. All this difficulty served only to deepen the impression Gardner Sears had made upon her mind, and was in his favor; for no young girl could have a young man so long, and under such circumstances in her thoughts, without insensibly becoming greatly interested in him. Now she is in her little bed-room alone and the door is fast, and she will no doubt embrace this opportunity to see the contents of the note! But here the difficulty was as great as before! Fanny had never gone to bed with a candle in her life, and this night afforded no exception to the rule of her parsimonious mistress. Many had been the hour, in the darkness, that she had set by her low window looking at the blue skies, or the stars, or the moon, walking in her brightness and holding communion with her gentle thoughts. Night and darkness and solitude, had so become her sisters, and she loved them. At such times, when all was still, and the village slept silently beneath the midnight watchers above, she would softly raise her window and steal out upon a low shed beneath it, which had a broad roof that, on the garden side, descended within three feet of the ground. She would by this means reach the dark garden, and then with rapid feet take her way through it to a shaded lane beyond, which terminated at the Methodist Chapel. Here a narrow path on one side, led to a grove by the water, where were three solitary graves. Between two of them she would kneel, and with strange awe held communion with the spirits of her father and mother, whom she had been told lay buried there.

She now closed her door, and sat by the window with the note, which for hours her wistful heart had been throbbing against, in her hand. She examined it by the faint star-beams that came in through the narrow panes, but so imperfect was this light, that with the closest scrutiny she could not tell whether there was any address upon the back of it or not How tantalizing! how very vexing. She did not say as much, but she keenly felt that it was so. She opened it (carefully, lest the rattle of the paper should be overheard,) and after close observation, she could detect the shadowy form of lines. Not all her ingenuity could help her in discovering the outline of a single word. Yet there words were written, and addressed to her eye! and by one whom she had begun to feel herself more deeply interested in, than any one she had ever known in her young existence.

'What would I *not* give for a light but for a half a minute' she said to herself. Perhaps I am doing what I ought not in wishing to read this but I must read it now? Joy, joy, there is the first glimmer of the moon rising on the hilltop but it will be long after it rises, on account of the high trees, before its beams will shine down into my window! I cannot wait! It always shines first on my 'home;' for by this term this interesting orphan always designated the grave of her parents! 'I will go *there* and catch its first light! There I know I shall do nothing I ought not to, and there if I feel that I can read this note, I know 'tis not wrong for me to do so.'

With these words spoken in her heart, for her lips moved not, she listened a moment if all were still in the Inn, and then raising her window she crept softly out upon the shed and the next moment, with a noiseless bound, was in the garden. She flitted through its shady walks, like some spirit of the night. She soon entered the lane and glided by the side of the hedge till she came to the stile leading to the little cemetery.

Her 'home' was a sweet, secluded spot, with a group of plumepending elms and solemn pines, overshadowing it. The river darkly glided with a broken rippling, past, within a few steps of the graves, which, as she entered the path leading to the spot, were just catching the first blush of the mellow moonlight. A deep, funereal repose, a sweet, awful calm, as if nature mourned for the dead, and offered her sympathy to the living, reigned there.

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Fanny knelt by the graves of her parents with her head bowed over the white marble slab, and breathed her childhood's prayer for their blessing and protection. Then, still on her knees, she drew forth the note and with trembling fingers held it so that the rising moon should fall upon it. With a bounding heart she read line after line, to its end.

'No, no! I cannot meet him,' she said in a low, hesitating tone, 'How kind his words are he must be good, and he is my friend no I dare not It is, yet, so sweet to know there is one who cares for me! I dare not for he is a stranger! Yet what shall I do? my lot is dreadful! I cannot, nay I am firmly resolved not to remain longer where I am so unhappy! Oh, I do want a friend to council with, some one in whom I can confide!'

'And here, sweet girl, dear gentle Fanny, you have one in me!' said a voice by her side a voice that she well knew, and trembled, but with joy, to listen to She did not start at the sudden surprise she did not fly she was silent and agitated with the unexpected presence of the one occupying her thought, though from his note, she half-expected him to be near her, in the distant path.

'You do not speak! forgive me, if I have intruded too boldly upon your sacred seclusion here!' he said in a tone of deep feeling that soothed her, while it made her heart flutter with, she knew not what, delight. 'Seeing you walk hither, I followed you, hoping you had been so generous as to comply with my wish, and had come to meet me!'

'No, no!' she said energetically; yet instantly her voice fell as she recollected that she came there to read his note; 'I did not read your note until this moment. But sir I will not deceive you!' she said frankly; for she knew not what deception was! 'I had no opportunity of learning the contents of the note in the house, and I came hither by my mother's grave to read it by moonlight.'

This answer pleased him much. He was glad in his heart that she had not come purposely to meet him 'Her maiden delicacy hath not been compromised the shadow of a shade,' he thought to himself. 'So that I see you for a moment, I am too happy to ask for what I am indebted for your sweet presence.'

'I don't know, sir, that I ought at this hour, and under such circumstances to remain here,' she said in an attitude preparatory to a flight.

'Nay--here by your parents' graves, you are safe from every evil design, were I evil. Their presence, though they are dead, is your protection; and believe it to be so, while I pray you to hear me one moment, sweet girl!'

The passion and touching eloquence of his words arrested her. Confidence, trusting and child-like, took possession of her bosom, and without fear she stood and waited for him to speak. He approached and gently took her hand. She withdrew it not, for the moonlight fell clear and pure upon his fine countenance and she saw truth and sincerity written there.

'Good and gentle Fanny for good and gentle I knew thou art he who addresses you, though a stranger, believe to be your friend, your brother, if that title be dearer to you! I know your history and it has deeply interested my heart! I have sought this interview with you to offer you my aid in any way in my power! you are very dear to me, for I have long loved you you withdraw your hand! hear me still your image, a face like thine, has ever filled my happy dreams. I knew not that it belonged to earth till to day I beheld you! you were its personification its sweet humanity From that moment my fate became involved and intimately united with your own! I felt that henceforth you were to be to me life and happiness. Nay move not away! Let not my ardent language offend you! I would tell you all I feel frankly and openly. Under the influence of my feelings I wrote to you. We have now met and, sweet child, you hold my destiny in your hand!'

Fanny listened bewildered She had never before been addressed in language at all like this; yet it found and set vibrating a harp of a thousand chords in her young bosom. She was silent for she knew not what to say. She stood

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by him with downcast eyes and heaving vesture. Never had such gentle words fallen upon her ear. They opened the sealed fountain of her heart, and moved, like the wind upon rippling waters, the fathomless sea of love there, that the zephyrs of affection had not breathed over for years. The thought was sweet to her soul that she was an object of any one's regard, and regard so tender and gentle, so inviting confidence, so full of sympathy and respect. Yet she answered becomingly.

'You are a stranger, sir, though a very kind one, and I am unknown to you also! a poor orphan I am, and my condition is that of a menial. Even did I know you to be good and humble I am far too humble for you to interest yourself in me. You have my heart's deep gratitude, sir!'

'Every word you speak, more deeply enlists my feelings nay my heart! I know your humble situation but I also believe you to belong by nature to a higher sphere I offer you my services I am rich I am free to do what I will. The woman you are with has, by her tyranny, forfeited all title to any consideration. You are yet young and happiness is before you if you will accept it. If you will leave her, my mother, for I have a kind generous mother, will become a mother to you. If you desire to be educated (for pure as your language is and graceful as I know your mind to be,) you cannot have enjoyed the advantages you are entitled to! you shall have that privilege. I can then be near you and you can know me better, and then instead of regarding me as now, as a stranger, you may look upon me as your friend.' Perhaps he would have added a dearer title; but his own delicacy forbade, and he feared to offend her for she seemed all the while like a timid fawn, half flying yet lingering still! If he had followed the impulse of his feeling he would have declared his passion for her; but there was a certain prudence which tempered his romantic enthusiasm, and prevented him from doing what, possibly, he might afterwards see reason to regret. His object was to get her beneath his mother's roof, have her thoroughly educated and silently study the character of her mind. She seemed to him as he observed her, like pure, yet unshaped gold, which he should find an untold pleasure in moulding after the image of his own intellectual and moral being.

'I look upon you as my friend already, sir,' she said in a voice that went to his heart; 'I never had a friend, and 'tis sweet to know that we are loved.'

He knew she did not mean by this word what it usually meant, but rather, regard. He was gratified by the ingenuousness which so unaffectedly made use of an expression in itself so full of meaning. He listened enraptured to her, as she continued, to his surprise, to speak a few sentences more of the deepest heart-feeling, and to tell him how her soul had yearned ever after a kindred soul. 'It is painful,' she said, 'to suppress and hush within the being all its uprising thoughts. As rain falls to the earth, and as clouds seek the sun, so do our thoughts seek another mind to pour themselves into. I have sometimes felt as if my heart would burst with its fullness of feeling, and then I would come here and disburthen it by the graves of my father and mother. You will think it strange in me to talk so, but I sometimes think I am like some spirit, I have imagined that has a body and the earth for its home, who without ever seeing a book or holding communion with men, lives in the outer world in an inner world of his own thoughts making a sort of mind-world between the earth he is on, and the heaven from which he came! I feel like such a spirit, always in the night, when I am alone, here, and think about myself. But you will think me foolish sir; but I know not how to talk in any other way.'

'No, I could listen to you forever, lovely one?' he said earnestly 'This is all new and beautiful to me!' and she continued in a low, musical voice like one musing, while he listened with strange delight;

'I have thought at times, I never had a mother of earth, though they tell me she lies here. I have a fanciful life and it is this. I seem to remember a time which I feel is my birth-morning. I see a beautiful hill all golden with buttercups and this you must know, is my favourite flower and I hear voices, and a hymn, and soft, unearthly music floating in the air, and then I find myself borne slowly along on wings, and my first sensation is happiness. That is my birth, and the sweet music I know came from the voice of my spirit-mother, in the fulness of her glandness! I sometimes think I have been a bird and I love to look upon the birds as they sing and to think I am their sister. It is a sweet wild world of harmony and love in which I have lived, sir.'

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‘Strange, unaccountable creature!’ said the young man, who had listened to her low musical tones, and her singular language with wonder and delight; and as he turned and gazed upon her thoughtful spiritual face in the moonlight, he asked himself if he were not in the presence of such a being as she had been describing rather than in that of a mortal. ‘And what,’ thought he, ‘are we, any of us, but mysterious, supernatural spirits coming from an unseen world, to be embodied here for awhile, and then depart again! This beauteous being, finding this world cold and unfeeling, has returned within herself, and so has been more eternal than material! she has her spiritual character unalloyed! In truth it is a spirit scene tainted with the earth it inhabits that I am listening to! How wildly beautiful is her mind! How graceful the childish artlessness of her thoughts! I could adore her for that pretty idea the love for the neglected buttercup! she is a study for a pure minded man, and her spiritual presence thus breathing out from her heaven within, will surely make me pure!’

‘Are you never unhappy?’ he asked. ‘I would know,’ he added with a smile, ‘if angels can be unhappy even on earth, if they have a heaven within to retreat into?’

‘You smile, sir,’ she said quietly, ‘because you think me fanciful. But this fancy is the atmosphere in which, like a free bird, I fly from the arrows of the bad, and seek my spirit–sky. I shed tears sometimes when I am hardly treated, but when I found that all unhappiness was in the thought, I early learned to teach them to fly from the danger into my inner world. So I early had the secret of happiness, and though I wept outwardly it was ever sunshine within.’

‘There is deep wisdom to be gathered from your gentle and strange words, Fanny, for so let me address you.’

‘I have no other name,’ she answered sadly ‘The secret of my name sleeps here! and she pointed impressively to the graves. ‘Sometimes I feel a feverish desire a wish almost amounting to nervousness to know who my parents were; but it soon passes away as my unavailing tears dry on my cheek, and I fly away to the happy scenes in the world of my own heart, and am happy again?’

‘With such a nature as yours, dear Fanny, this world mankind the universe all might be annihilated and you would be a universe, a heaven–world in yourself! I know not what to make of you. With so much wisdom and truth and gravity, yet so fanciful nay that is not the term! I wish I had some better one to express what I mean.’

‘Dreamy and creative! and living and speaking and acting, as if the unreal creations were the true world,’ she answered beautifully. ‘Is not this my character?’

‘That is what I mean. You have described yourself truly. But I cannot explain how so much good sense as you possess; such just judgment of things, as you evince, can exist with your strange, gravely told, but pretty story of your not having a mother of earth, but was born on a mound of golden buttercups.’

‘No I must have had a mother of earth also,’ she said in a thoughtful and earnest voice, which, with the words that she uttered, more than ever perplexed him, and made him resolve to give himself up wholly to the study of so strange and unnatural (yet childishly natural and therefore pure nature) a character as she presented to his contemplation.’ The mother of the golden hill of buttercups was my spirit’s mother and I shall always be her child as I am now. Death never will take her from me. This mother ‘and she looked at the grave, was my human natures’ mother!’

‘Have we all a spiritual mother, Fanny?’ he asked interested in thoughts, so new and so beautifully expressed, with a manner as if it were the commonest thing in the world to talk thus.

‘Yes I think so. She is a mother who is *all* good. She guides us and warns us and keeps us from evil till we die. If we do wrong she is grieved and her grief makes us unhappy, when we hear her voice in our hearts. ‘Have you not felt that you have grieved your spirits’ mother?’

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`Singular being! you mean conscience.'

`I have given her no name but spirit-mother.'

`Fanny, you are not fitted for the sphere you are placed in! you must leave and go to my mother's my earth-mother's home.' He did not smile as he repeated this for her deep spiritual earnestness had made an impression upon his soul. He had, himself, lived enough in the world of his own highly imaginative mind, to know how fascinating such a life is; and he could easily conceive how a young and intellectual creature like Fanny, with a gentle, but strongly poetical fancy, when the world around her offered her no love, could teach her thoughts to live in the inner and happier world of her two-fold being, till it came to be the real life, and as such, freely discourse of it! Beautiful as this introverted state of being and enjoyment, was to witness; delightful as it was to listen to her mellow dreamy tones, as to a voice from the invisible world he felt that so sweet a person belonged as much to earth as heaven, and that this earth had only to be made lovely and attractive by means of Friendship, Truth and Love to her heart to cause her to find enjoyment in the external world as comprehensive and as capable of filling her soul as the creations of her own.

`I cannot go now! I will wait and bear patiently a little longer the lot in which my fate has been cast. `Perhaps,' and she thought of her beautiful tresses and the menace of her mistress, `perhaps the time may come when I shall need your friendship.'

In vain he plead with her to avail herself now of it. She replied that she could not be ungrateful to the person who had protected her youth, even though she was cruel. `It is her nature to be stern and I forgive her,' she said peacefully. `I have doubtless, been careless and often given her cause for anger!'

`You go beyond true charity, Fanny.'

`I owe her much I owe her good husband's memory much and cannot leave her without some grave cause. If one that I fear should occur '

`Then you will call upon me, dear Fanny?'

`Yes for I feel a confidence and truth in you, I should do violence to the truth of my own nature not to confess. But I cannot, in any alternative, leave with you alone!'

`No my mother and *yours* shall come with me,' he said quickly, at once appreciating her hesitating words and blushing manner.

`Then, if I am compelled to seek another home, it shall be as you wish for I answer you frankly. I feel happier for this interview, for I know that I am not quite alone in the living world of people! I must go now, sir!'

`A line given to the barber, Mr. Taft, who is my friend, will reach me either at Boston or at my father's, ten miles hence, on the same day. He will be instructed to forward it. I cannot endure leaving you in the Inn again, even for an hour; but the same Providence that hath guarded you, will still watch over you. I shall not, however, wait for any untoward event to occur, before seeing you again. I shall send my dear mother to you, and see if her eloquence can't prevail upon you. Mrs. Power will be easily satisfied. Will you promise to write me if anything unpleasant occurs?'

`I do. It is the only way in which I can express my gratitude for your interest in me.'

`Now, good night and may you be happy for the sweet joy and hope you have poured, like holy oil, upon my heart.'

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With these words of parting she left him standing gazing with wonder and strange happiness at his heart, after her receding figure, as it disappeared in the shadows of the path beyond the chapel.

CHAPTER VI.

'In men's eyes I am a hunchback, In God's *thou!*'

When Gardner Sears reached his chamber in the inn, before retiring for the night, he trimmed his lamp and sat down to his table to write to his confidant in all matters, his mother.

Hillside Inn, – *Half past twelve night.* My Dear Mother:

I have met her spoken with her, and but I will not anticipate. I must forestal your opinion, at the first, that 'she could not be a discreet maiden to meet a stranger.' She got my note, but did not meet me in consequence of it. So rigidly is she kept at labor that she had no opportunity to learn its contents till the moon rose, when she stole out by her mother's grave, to open it by moonlight. I saw her graceful figure kneeling by the grave-side, for I had been lingering near, with hope, and approached near enough to hear her soliloquize upon the contents of my note. I heard her say, 'no, no, I may not meet him kind, generous as he seems to be. No I cannot accede to his request!' I drew nearer, and she recognized me, and would have fled. But I detained her with gentle and eloquent appeal. She grew trusting and remained to listen to me. I urged her to fly her bondage, and offered her, dear mother, *your* protection. But she was firm but finally promised, if some evil which she did not name, but which she dreaded would come upon her, should befall her, she would then avail herself of my proffer of your roof, *if* you came for her; and *this* you must do. What propriety in all her conduct! But if I was charmed with her sweet, maidenly modesty, I was enchanted with the character of her lovely and natural mind. I wish you could have heard her speak her thoughts. Her language is pure and singularly expressive of every shade of feeling. She is an extraordinary character, and I wish you to see and know her. The study a brief but sweet lesson it was of her mind to-night, has opened to me a new world of beauty. She is as pure and guileless as a child of seven yet she is seventeen or eighteen. She soon grew more confiding, and opened her soul's treasures to me. What a mine of unworked gold lay in the foundation of her being. She is a very gentle and single spirit. She talked in a strange, sweet, low voice, like one musing aloud, and I listened breathless, as to pure and spiritual communication. Her words recalled the thoughts and hopes of my early years, and such as I love to indulge when in my better hours. I thought then, as I listened, 'tis for such thoughts as these, alone, we exist. How wide the contrast of their singleness with the double-minded wordiness of the cautious and courteous world. She is a wild, beautiful, gentle creature; for these opposite terms just suit her. She is heart-aspiring, and loves to soar into the new and the unrealized. She is full of fanciful memories, and discourses sweetly and gravely of what she calls her 'Fanciful Life.' You should listen to her to know her. Blessings on her generous and confiding heart; blessings on her delightful fancy, which creates only to love. Let her trust in them to the end, and without end, whilst they are so pure and hallowing. I have heard that gigantic thinker, R. Waldo Emerson, say, 'nothing is so natural as the supernatural.' The body stands in the soul's light, and casts a shadow upon it, and the world of minds is in twilight kept out of its best powers and possessions. This pure, artless girl has it always sunshine at her heart. One pure spirit broods over all her thoughts. Her existence seems divine in human. She lives in an ideal world of ever changing beauty, and every word she utters enriches the soul of the listener. But most I value her for is the loveliness of her piety. There is a holy and perpetual Sabbath at her heart which is the house of peace. You will say, my dear mother, that such a person may be a shrine fit, perhaps, to receive the votaries of worshippers of the ideal and the beautiful, but not a suitable friend and companion for common life. But this peace and heart-spirituality is consistent with the most useful activity. Here is the piety of character, not of habit. I love the seclusion of her spirit the gentle fancies of her inner life the fresh upspringings of her untaught thoughts which come from unfathomed fountains in her soul.

I closely studied her character, for it was like an open book to my intellectual survey; fresh and unfolding to the

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view like that oriental flower which opens and expands under the steady gaze of the eye. I was struck with the solitude of her young spirit, the attitude of which was one of lowliest aspiration, yet, *evermore* aspiration. I shall see her again in a few days, for I shall return from Boston purposely, and to visit you. I wish to establish a plainer confidence between her and myself to read more clearly the delightful pages of her freshly written heart. There is much `mere fancy, shining of sunlight upon flowers, glancing of fireflies through the night,' to use the language written upon another and similar mind, in her character; but it is because the tenderness of her feelings makes her love all images associated with them. The delicacy and purity of her feelings often gives grace to her expression: but as yet she has no grasp of thought. This is her dark side, and why should it not be? Shapeless mists float around all of us; shall we not search into them? The child or maiden who loves the bright yellow buttercup so dearly, must be very positive to the gloomy and darker aspects of nature. But darkness cannot long lie around such a spirit. It is only there because *her own life* does not mingle *with her daily life*; because no one receives her thoughts, and they return to haunt her. If she could love in peace and joy, the sunlight would soon melt away the shadows. It shall be mine, dear mother, to draw her spirit forth from the ideal to daily intercourse with the beautiful and the good, and the true of the real, to teach her to love in peace and joy; all that is fair and lovely in nature, and let the sunlight of friendship and truth disperse the shadows from her young heart.

Your affectionate son,

Gardner Sears.

P. S. I have also another object which I intend to pursue. It is to ascertain, if possible, who are her parents. I know that by perseverance, which I shall not want, I can learn what ship they came in, as files must be preserved. I shall leave no means untried to effect my object. I am as perfectly assured as I am of my own life, that her parents were persons of distinction. There is, notwithstanding her long ten years of bondage, an aristocracy in her finely cut profile, in the native delicacy of her manners, in the faultless proportions and feminine grace of her figure, and in the symmetry and moulded finish of her hands, though sadly marred by slavish toil, that clearly establishes this in my mind. You know that I believe in `blood' in the superiority of races, and that education, pride of rank, refinement and intellectual cultivation, are grafted into the stock, *permeate* it and become hereditary. `Fanny' bears every mark of blood and high lineage. *Au revoir*, dear mother, till I write you from Boston, whither I shall proceed to-morrow, to search out the mystery hanging over her birth. G. S.

A fortnight elapsed after this letter was penned, during which Gardner Sears was perseveringly engaged in endeavoring to ascertain the facts connected with the arrival of her parents during the season of the cholera. After three days search and inquiry, he learned that a packet ship called the `Ashton,' had arrived at Boston, from the Thames, on the day harmonizing with the barber's account of that on which the hackney coach had stopped at the barrier; for the barber had said that the black coachman, Pompey Slack, had reported that he took them directly from the vessel through the city without stopping. Having ascertained this fact, his next step was to find the owners, for he could discover no list of the passengers on the files he searched. One of them he found was dead, and the other had removed his business to Philadelphia. Without hesitation he started the same evening for that city, and appeared in his counting room. On referring to his files the bill of lading, with the names of the passengers was found. There were more than twenty. He carefully read them over, but could fix on none of them positively. There were among them three married gentlemen with `lady and child.' These names he copied upon his tablets, inquired where the captain of the Ashton then was, and learned that he was on a farm in New York, near Geneva. He left Philadelphia, and with the persevering temper of his character, at once directed his course to Geneva, resolved to avail himself of every avenue of information at his command.

The retired sailor was seated in his verandah, after dinner, in a white roundabout, quietly enjoying his cigar, when Gardner Sears made his appearance in the walk to the farm cottage, and was at the piazza before the captain who had been watching him as he was coming up the lane, just as he would inspect a ship just hove in sight could make out his colors. Gardner introduced himself, and was received with a hearty shake of the hand by the farmersailor, who frankly offered him both a cigar and chair at the same time.

Fanny H-----; or, The Hunchback and the Roue

'I have intruded upon you, Captain Wallis,' said Gardner, 'to make some inquiries about some persons who came passengers in the Ashton, which I believe you once commanded out of Boston.'

'Yes, sir; and a fine ship she was too, answered the captain with animation; 'but,' he added sadly, 'her bones now lie at the bottom of the sea. But what passage do you allude to?'

'The one before her shipwreck.'

'That was in thirty-two in the cholera season. I remember it well. We arrived in port in the midst of it.'

'Do you recollect particularly any of your passengers?'

'It is a long tack, beating ten years up to windward, sir, but if you can give me any clue to what you desire '

'Here is a list of some of your passengers, which, after great difficulty, I obtained from the owner of the Ashton, now in Philadelphia. '

The captain took it from him and glanced over it, and instantly his eye lighted up, and Gardner, catching the intelligent working of his bronzed countenance, bent with eagerness forward.

'Mr. Sears, here is indeed a name I have never forgotten. It is that of Mr. Henry Léon. I have many a time thought of them of his lovely and accomplished wife, and sweet little girl, and wondered at their mysterious disappearance.'

'What occurred to them?' questioned Gardner eagerly, feeling almost assured of having at last found what he had sought with so much diligence.

'They were a noble pair,' said Captain Wallis, as if musing upon the past, rather than heeding the question put to him. 'He was a chivalrous, high-souled fellow, that Henry Léon, and one of the handsomest men I ever saw, before or since. His wife too; she was unlike any woman I have met with. I never beheld a more lovely, bewitching countenance, and to hear her talk was like listening to music. They were formed for one another, if people ever were, and were devoted to their beautiful intellectual child. That child always came up to my ideas of an angel. I can see her now, with her bright brown cluster of curls, leaning upon my knee, for I was a great favorite of hers, and looking up into my face, talk to me like some fairy thing, wildly and prettily about flowers, and birds, and the far skies, and the solemn mysteries of the deep sea. The child seemed to have a mind too vast for her frame. I can recollect, as if it were yesterday, a pleasant story she told me about the creation of flowers; she said that the great God made the world large and round, with its ocean, its mountains and deep rivers; but that he gave the making of the flowers and pearls and diamonds, and beautiful sea-shells to the winged children of the stars; and that was the cause of such a great and beautiful variety; for each one formed, and shaped, and colored them as her wayward fancy led. Her mother too, was full of such beautiful poetry of the mind, and loved to teach her these things. But still there was a cloud at her heart, and at his. I could never discover what it was, though I would have given half my ship to know, for I never had passengers I became so much interested in.'

'It must be that they are the ones I seek,' exclaimed Gardner with a bounding heart, yet trembling lest he should be proved in error. 'Such is the child now!'

'What child? Is she alive? Do you know them, sir?' inquired Captain Wallis with quick emotion. 'I would give much to know what became of them.'

'Will you be so kind as to tell me, before I explain, what you mean by their mysterious fate. Your reply will settle the point I aim at. God grant it be as I wish!'

Fanny H-----; or, The Hunchback and the Roue

‘You see, they came on board after the ship had cleared, and while I was anchored in the Thames twenty miles below London, waiting for the ebb, having come down thus far with the last tide. We lay directly abreast the Bishop's Palace, and as I was looking at a herd of deer playng in the park, I saw a carriage driving along the river road at great speed, stop suddenly, and a gentleman and lady and a child get out of it, and hastening to the water side, hail a shore-boat and make for the ship, while the carriage drove back the way it came. The gentleman, as the boat run under the quarter, stood up and asked if the ship was the ‘Ashton,’ and bound to America, for we had the American ensign at the gaff. On receiving my reply in the affirmative, he spoke a work to the two Thames boatmen, when they pulled alongside, and the next moment he was on the deck, and approached me. He addressed me with great courtesy, and with that case of manner which always indicates the true gentleman, yet with evident anxiety and agitation, and asked me if I had accommodations for additional passengers. I told him that I had one state-room, which had been engaged under the name of Léon the day before I left London, and that, as the person had not come in the ship, it was at his service.

‘I am the person alluded to,’ he instantly answered, ‘and rejoice that I am not too late. I was delayed in reaching London till this morning, when finding your ship had sailed, and being told that I could probably overtake you before the next tide, I started in pursuit, and congratulate myself in getting on board.’

‘They came passengers with us, but, as I said, there was a cloud upon them. They kept much to themselves, conversing little with the other passengers, but with me were free and affable.’

‘Do you know *who* engaged the passage in London?’ asked Gardner.

‘No; the list was at the consignee's, and the state rooms were taken there.’

‘What was the firm?’

‘Morton & Co.’

Gardner wrote the name of the firm down on his tablets, and Captain Wallis continued:

‘But the manner of their leaving the ship was as sudden and mysterious as their coming on board. She had just hauled into dock, notwithstanding the pilot had told us the cholera was in the city, and I left for the Custom House. During my absence, I was told on my return, Mr. Léon went ashore and soon returned with a carriage, and getting into it with his lady and child, and one trunk, drove rapidly off. I thought nothing of it for some days, when the cholera subsiding, I thought I would call and see them, supposing them to be at the Tremont House, where he had told me he should put up, as I had described the character of this hotel to him. But he had not been there, nor, on inquiry, at any hotel in the city. I could hear nothing from him, and finally concluded that he had gone into the country without delaying in town. But some weeks afterwards I was spoken to about some baggage, which the custom house officer said belonged to some one of my passengers; and on looking at it I saw it was Mr. Léon's. My interest in him then revived, and I resolved to take steps to know what had become of him. I put an advertisement in the paper, calling upon the owner to remove his trunks, and describing them, one being marked H. H., the other H. L.; for he came on board with three, taking one with him, so the mate said. But all was unavailing, and I sailed again without hearing from him, and from that day to this I have known nothing about them.

‘I can tell you,’ answered Gardner, who had now no further doubt as to the identity of these persons with the parents of Fanny. He then briefly related what he had gathered respecting them, of their arrival at the barrier, their death by the pestilence, and the orphanage of the child. Captain Wallis listened with deep attention, and jumping up from his chair when Gardner had ended, exclaimed with an emphatic oath,

‘It is the same. The child is my pretty Fanny.’

Fanny H-----; or, The Hunchback and the Roue

`That is the name! There can be no question of it,' said Gardner firmly.

`Poor noble gentleman and sweet lady. Such then was your sad fate to find on this side the sea an untimely grave!' said the Captain with emotion. `It is a great relief to me, at any rate, to have this fog-bank cleared up. So they fell victims to the cholera but twenty-four hours after landing from my ship. But there was a cloud upon their hearts, as I told you, sir, and no doubt they are in sunshine now aloft. But 'twas a pity!' and he dashed a tear from his eyes, and hemmed very determinedly. `But the pretty child! Have you seen her, sir?'

`It is on her account I came to see you.'

`Does she recollect me then? Did she send? you' asked the Captain with a look of surprise and pleasure.

`No. I will explain to you. The child is now, or was ten days since, in the Inn at Hillside, the generous landlord of which adopted her; but his wife early took a dislike to the child, and made her lot painful as possible, and after his death a year ago, she put her to every menial office and treated her like a slave.'

`The internal hag!' exclaimed the Captain.

`I accidentally saw her, and struck with her grace and beauty, which even her degrading condition had not impaired, I inquired her history, and its recital at once enlisted every generous emotion in my bosom.'

`There was some tenderer sentiments than generosity at the bottom, if your heart was sounded with a deep sea-line,' said the Captain with a finely playful smile. `But go on, Mr. Sears.'

`I fortunately succeeded in getting an interview with her, and her conversation filled me with admiration for her intelligence, purity and goodness of heart. A village school had done all it could for a mind like hers, but nature, and thought, and the patient schooling of the spirit under adversity had done more. I discovered, in a word, that her mind was not less lovely than her person.'

`In a word, Mr. Sears, nay don't blush in anticipation, you fell over head and ears in love with her. Well, I believe you to be a young man worthy of her, if she were a queen's daughter. So you at once started on this romantic expedition in search of information touching her parents.'

`The favorable result, so far, divests it of all its romantic character,' said Gardner. `I have been fully rewarded for what I have done.'

`I am gratified that it has been in my power to serve your purpose. It is a generous and noble one. But,' added Captain Wallis gravely. `Suppose Fanny should prove to be a child of low birth or, pardon me sir, a child of shame. This is a queer world.'

`I cannot conceive it possible for either one or the other to be true. Yet were it so I should feel no less interested in her nay, her situation would take a deeper hold of my sympathies, and more strongly enlist my regard.'

`You are a noble young man, and I honor you,' answered Captain Wallis grasping his hand. `But you are not going to up anchor and away without a shot in your locker. We must drink Fanny's health, and you must dine with me.' Gardner yielded to his cordial invitation, though impatient to be gone, for he had been already ten days absent from Boston. At length he took leave of Captain Wallis, who made him promise to write to him whatever should transpire further in relation to Fanny's parentage, which was still left in an impenetrable mystery. The subject of the trunks had been again alluded to while they were at dinner, and the Captain wrote and delivered to him a note, directed to the Head of the Custom House, briefly mentioning the facts of a passenger having died of the cholera ten years before, leaving the trunks there; and wishing him, if they were to be found, to deliver them into the

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possession of the bearer of the letter. He also recommended to Gardner, to ascertain what became of the trunks they took away from the ship, adding, 'It may afford a clue! They were rich, it was very clear, and she had brilliant jewelry. He had several hundred dollars in golden guineas and Bank of England notes. I now recollect. Whatever become of them. This landlord doubtless had good reason for taking the child in.'

Gardner thanked him for the suggestion, and taking a cordial leave of him, they parted like old friends; so strong is the link of a mutual interest in an absent friend to bund together two strangers. Of how many persons, says an accurately observing writer, do we only have notice of their existence, who yet certify us that if we could see them nearly and daily and work with them, they would be our dearest benefactors. And, so at least, are we apprized of the richness and nobleness of the population of the Universe, and may fairly infer the worth of those we have not seen from the traits of those we have met.

Leaving Gardner Sears on his return to Bosten, we will now go back nearly three chapters, and resume our narrative, with the arrival of the two young men, the exquisite and the hunchback at the 'General Warren' Inn; which event took place just a fortnight after Fanny's interview with Gardner Sears and his departure in search of facts touching her parentage. At the commencement of our digression we had said that Fanny's lot for a week or two past, had been made heavier by a certain occurrence, an account of which we proceeded to detail to the reader, and which we have just now terminated. The widow indeed had not discovered her interview with Gardner, but she had discovered *the note* in her chamber. To all her interrogations Fanny was silent, and the widow overwhelmed her with invectives, and from that day made her sleep at the foot of her own bed, on a straw mattress; and not satisfied with abusing her, and tasking her by day, she scolded her half the night. Poor Fanny! How often did your thoughts go out after the young man, whose kind and tender voice yet lingered in the echoes of her heart.

The two young travelers, it has been seen, were both deeply interested in the story which the widow Power told them of the beautiful bar-maid. They were, however, differently and oppositely affected, even as their characters were opposite. They were twin brothers, and sons of a wealthy merchant of Boston, and were both graduates of Harvard College. They were about twenty-four or five years of age, and had no profession; the one passing his time in a round of fashionable dissipation, and living an idle and luxurious life, though a young man of talent and of mind; the other spending his days in reading, in acquiring new languages as the keys to new and vaster sciences, drinking into his soul, with a passionate thirst, the waters of the intellectual fountains that for ages have been gushing from the human mind. The accidental circumstance of physical formation, may have been the true cause of this diversity of habits and pursuits. Hammond Bramhall, was an elegant and exceedingly handsome young man, with a noble, symmetrical person, and a striking air of fashion about him. Brentnall Bramhall, in his third year, had met with an accident by which his spine was injured and he grew up a hunchback. Even when a boy, his pale face had that look of moral suffering that sensitiveness of glance and manner, peculiar to the unfortunate cripple. Early, very early in years, he seemed to show that he keenly felt his misfortune, but he spoke not of it. He saw his brother admired at the home-gatherings of the young of both sexes and himself neglected, and he *knew* wherefore it was so. And so he learned to retire within himself to bury himself in the deep arm-chair in the library, and learn to love books instead of his fellows for they opened their store or knowledge and entertainment to him as readily as to his brother. And there, while the shouts of the merriment reached him from the hall, he would for hours, till twilight dimmed the page, exist among the creations of genius! As he read of gallant knights, and their deeds of prowess, he was no longer the pale lame boy, but with lance in rest and backing a mailed charger he leaped into the lists. But these dreams passed and sadness hung upon his soul. Yet there was one who shunned him not! a fair, blue-eyed, gentle girl of twelve, four years younger than himself. She loved most all that seemed most to want to be loved. She saw how the pale intellectual boy was neglected, and his brother courted, and her heart opened, and her spirit yearned, to tell him he was not despised. And so one day she followed him into the library; softly, and unheard, she glided to the chair in which he was seated. A book was open before him, but he was weeping, and the tears pattered like rain upon the leaves. She gently took his thin hand, and with the other put aside the soft brown curls from his large classic forehead and full-veined temples, and softly whispered his name.

From that moment there was established a sweet community of sympathy and gratitude between them, and the spirit of the lame boy grew from that day lighter; the darkness rolled from his soul, and he became patient and enduring; for he felt that he was not despised that he was not an out cast of his kind, if one so pure and gentle and lovely, loved to commune with him. Do the careless and the unfeeling and the heedless know what they do, when they lightly wound the feelings of the lame? Do they know what deep sensibilities they wound, what hallowed retreats of the shrinking spirit they intrude upon. If they could know how a look a word from the careless or the cruel, pierced like arrows of steel through the spirit that the neglect of the cold world has broken and bruised, they would pause ere they swept with rude fingers, that harp of a thousand sensitive strings trembling in his bosom. Nay, they would love to heal where they would have wounded; study to make him forget the accidental condition of his destiny; and, with the gentle touches of the master-hand of universal love strike the echoing harp of his soul, till it speaks forth its true in harmony and beauty; for when there is such delicacy of perception, such finely strung chords of feelings, there will be found notes of deepest passion and tones of majesty and power, like echoes from that spiritual world, in which the lame, as well as the blind, love most to dwell.

It was, the accidental circumstance to which we have alluded, that decided the habits of mind of Brentnal. He found himself neglected by the world around him, and he sought companionship with the generations past, who wounded him not with their prejudices and neglect. So he loved books, and Hammond being flattered by the world, loved the world. Their minds originally were equally good; perhaps Brentnal had the most mind, Hammond the most talent. The one was haughty by indulgence and admiration; the other retiring from innate sensitiveness and his habits of seclusion. Hammond had lost much of the purity of his character by his mode of life, and in reference to woman was almost destitute of principle. Brentnal was proud and honorable, and possessed much dignity of character. Within a year a change had come over his spirits, and it was darkening again. The little maiden of twelve had grown to a beautiful woman of twenty two, and still remained his friend; but to his surprise and mortification she suddenly married, and he was alone. He did not love her he was happy in her presence, and she had become very dear to him. But this event proved, as he imagined, in his sensitive spirit, that he had never been regarded by her as she would have regard any other young man, and gloomy feelings possessed his soul. In the depths of his being he vowed never again to seek the companionship of women. But there came a few weeks before we met him, a cousin an orphan with her widowed mother, on a visit to his father's roof from Carolina; and she had not been many days domesticated in the household, before her beauty and wit, the fascinations of her mind and the graces of her heart, made a deep impression upon him. And as well, we may add, upon the handsome roue his brother. At the time of their alighting at the Inn they were on their way to join a trouting party at a lake a few miles west from Hillside, from which village they intended to start in a hired wagon early in the morning, and by a cross road proceed to their destination. Trouting was the only recreation Brentnal ever engaged in, and for this sport he was ever willing to leave his books. Supper was now announced by the smiling widow, and the brothers followed her into a neat dining room where the cloth was laid. Hammond glanced round for Fanny, and not seeing her looked out of humor. But the next moment she entered becomingly dressed, and waited on the table, while the widow took a chair at the backside of the room. In vain Hammond tried to draw the maiden into conversation, or to get her to raise her eyes to his handsome, assuming face. Her replies were quiet and just what they should be to a word, and the widow approved. Brentnal, admired the graceful girl not less than his brother, but his observation was unobtrusive, and yet he watched every movement of her face, every motion of her buoyant form as she moved about the table. There was a manifest difference between the manner of replying to him, and that towards his brother. When he spoke she always lifted her eyes evenly to his and betrayed no embarrassment; but it was the reverse with Hammond.

'Yes,' said Brentnal to himself with slight bitterness, 'the hunchback is nothing in her eyes. It will never be my happiness to create that blushing timid emotion I behold and admire when Hammond speaks to her, in any woman. My deformity were endurable were man alone to be around me; but now that each day shows me how necessary woman's admiration and regard is to man's happiness, I begin to feel that I am accursed.'

The widow tried artfully to draw from the young men their names and personal history, but neither felt in any mood to indulge her curiosity, and they soon afterwards retired from the table and were shown to separate rooms

for the night.

Brentnal remained up in his chamber, seated, brooding painfully over his destiny as a hunchback surrounded with forms of the beautiful, who sought affinity only with their kind. None had smiled on him ever, but all had coldly and with a stare of surprise and, he believed, contempt, passed him by to lean blandishingly upon his brother's arm. There were his thoughts. The sight of Fanny, so spiritually beautiful, and her seeming disregard of his presence, and so full of maiden consciousness at his brother's, had re-awakened these unpleasant emotions. His mind then reverted to his fair peerless cousin, Gabriette, and in the bitterness of his despair he cast himself in tears upon the outside of his bed.

Hammond in the meanwhile having closed his door, began to deliberate upon some plan to get the beautiful orphan from beneath the roof of the widow and into his own possession. He waited until he thought his brother slept, and then opening his door he stole silently down stairs into the bar-room, where a light yet burned, for it was but a little after nine o'clock. The hostess was not there, contrary to his expectations, and he looked around for her. He discovered her through the half-open door seated alone in her `Sanctus.'

CHAPTER VII.

`I'll pick you two vices and make a devil.' `Name one.' `Lust!' `Then avarice is the fellow to 't.' `Her life is with the flow'rets, She drinks the moonlight gleam, Her voice is in the song of birds And gliding of the stream.'

Hammond Bramhall paused a moment to gather a little assumption, and then tapped lightly upon the side of the door with his ungloved finger. The widow started and looked up, for she was at that moment in a brown study, musing upon the chances against the probability that the Domine, when he became her lord, would take any undue power upon himself in the little kingdom where she had so long ruled over Captain Ben, and latterly as an absolute potentate. She half frowned when she saw who it was, and but smiled as he smiled, and bowed and invited him in.

`Set down, sir! I thought you were gone to bed sir! I trust your room suits you, sir. The sheets are well aired and its a nice mattress with a feather bed under! Sit down, sir!—take this rocking chair the `other is quilted and may lint your coat, Some gentlemen I know is mighty particular about lint. This is my `sanctus' sir; Preceptor Tobitt calls it my cabinet, and says this chair is my throne, ha, ha, ha!' and the widow shook her fat sides, and verily one would have believed, if they did not peer too closely into her hard unchanging eye, that she was the best natured, nice body in the world. `You don't know the `master,' sir! he's a real funny man when it takes his humor. He's been makin' me laugh with his quips ever since I showed you and that humphack gentleman up to bed!'

`No doubt, master Tobitt is a very clever person; he cannot be otherwise, good Mrs. Power, if he has the faculty of entertaining so intelligent a lady as yourself,' answered Hammond, who with admirable tact could adapt himself to any character he came in contact with; for he was really a young man of no ordinary mind, though he at times affected foppery of language and manner; but his mind had been vitiated and his talents were now turned from their higher uses to subserve the lowest ends. Yet he could at any time re-assume the outward semblance of that dignity of character which belongs to the true gentleman, and thus like a moral Janus he presented two opposite faces to society; one was stamped with all his vices! the other with a fair copy of all the virtues which he had *not!* In the presence of his cousin Gabrielle he was an accomplished `hypocrite;' in that of Fanny an open designing libertine. He closely eyed the widow, to study the effect of his words, every one of which had its errand towards the developement of her character. He saw that she was gratified at the compliment, and that his way was easy. `This gentleman is no doubt the village school-master,' he added.

`Yes, sir, Master Tobitt has kept here for two years and better. A very nice man for the childer'. He has boarded with me ever since my poor dear husband died, a year ago last April. Its a lone life a widow's, sir.'

Fanny H-----; or, The Hunchback and the Roue

'I should think it your own fault, Mrs. Power, if you remain long a widow,' answered Hammond gallantly. 'That's a pretty ring on your little finger.'

'That's Master Tobitt's taste,' she answered suffering the young man to take her fat hand and dally with it.

'Ah, master Toby, eh!' and he looked at her significantly full in the eyes. The widow tried to blush very prettily, but as her face was always a full red, the result of her efforts, if successful, were not apparent. 'I comprehend the affair, Mrs. Power. So Mr. Tobitt is the happy man.'

'We are to be married to-morrow night,' said the widow.

'So soon! I am half resolved to stay to the bridal, for the sake of giving a kiss to the bride. Upon my honor, you must have been a beauty on your first marriage eve!

'Mr. Snip told me yesterday that I had not changed, in his eye, the turning of a lap-board since I was sixteen.'

'Mr. Snip is a man of penetration.'

'He is and says so many pleasant things that I always gives him a dram when he comes in.'

'He cannot fail to make himself agreeable to a person so generous.'

'He's very different from Tony Taft, our barber, who never took but one dram in his life and that was ginger pop a fortnight ago, which made him tipsy the weak toddle-brain! I wish I had my will with him, he should never step foot in this tavern again!'

'How has Mr. Tony Taft drawn upon himself your displeasure.'

'He makes too free of admiration of my Fanny and, when he promised two weeks ago to '

Here the widow bit her tongue and stopped short in her speech, for she had nigh betrayed her negotiation about the sale of Fanny's locks; a trader, though feeling herself perfectly justifiable in carrying it through, she did not care to have made known. Hammond instantly divined that she was going to betray something about Fanny and internally resolved to know it. Her allusion to her also afforded him the opportunity he sought to speak of her without abruptly awaking her suspicion.

'This barber must be a pressing fellow,' he said in suitable tone of indignant feeling. 'Fanny a pretty name she cannot have any regard for such a low person!'

'She! No! I'd like to catch her having a regard for any body low or high!'

'Certainly; she possesses too great beauty to be suffered to torm promiscuous acquaintances. I am glad Mrs. Power nay permit me to say, in anticipation, *Mrs. Tobitt*, (here the widow dropped her eyes, and simpered and exclaimed affectedly, 'an't you ashamed, sir!') that you are so discreet with her. She is a nice girl!

'We'll change the subject if you please, sir,' she said gravely.

'Nay, my good madam,' said Hammond taking out an elegant watch and beginning slowly to wind it up, 'this is the very subject I came in here to talk with you about! Let me place this ring which I take from my guard chain, upon your middle finger, which it seems to have been made for, and do me the honor to accept of it as a bridal present.'

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‘Oh, sir, that is two handsome for you to part with.’

‘Therefore I do it the more readily, that you may have proof of the regard I entertain for you. Nay, I will place it on myself!’

‘If Master Tobitt should happen to see you now,’ she said smiling, as he forced the brilliant smoothly over the fat knuckles to its place.

‘The bridal finger of your left hand is all he can lay claim to. It is very becoming!’

‘Very handsome! How it sparkles! Is it a real diamond, sir?’ she said surveying it with an avaricious eye, the true expression of which he readily understood, and beheld with secret satisfaction.

‘Nothing less costly should adorn your hand, fair widow. This Master Tobitt is to be envied. But are you not afraid to keep so pretty a maiden in the way of his temptation, as Fanny. No men are to be trusted, Mrs. Power! even your charms might not be sufficient to dazzle your husband’s eyes, so that he should not see this young girl’s beauty. You see I am your friend and speak freely, Mrs. Power!’

‘Yes, sir, I am satisfied you mean well,’ answered the widow turning pale and speaking in a weak, fluttering voice, for the firebrand he had cast, had ignited the combustibles of jealousy in her bosom. ‘But the girl,’ here her voice was raised and her colour came back with a quick flush, ‘*dare* not suffer him to speak to her! *He dare* not look at her! Let me catch him!’

‘But Mrs. Power, you cannot always have watch over him at all times, nor over her. You cannot but see that I have in view only your peace and honor, as you have been so frank to me, as to make me the confidant of your approaching nuptials. I should deeply regret any occurrence thereafter, that should cast a cloud over the sunshine of your second marriage!’

The widow made no reply, but sat thoughtful and ill at ease in her mind, as the agitated motion of her body plainly showed. Plans of rage and vengeance rolled through it like a succession of thunder gusts, and she was bewildered with the confusion in her brain. At length she spoke, and her voice was low but determined.

‘I have made up my mind. The girl shall be sent to the poor house where she belongs. She shall go to-morrow morning before breakfast, and I will lead her there myself. I have done too much for her, the ungrateful huzzy and this is my returns for it. Charity sir, never was properly rewarded in this world, sir, and them as takes in a pauper must be content with a pauper’s pay. The jade tramps in the morning.’

‘Those we do most for, Mrs Power, are often the most unthankful. They feel they owe a debt, and this feeling too often begets a false idea of dependence and dislike.’

‘Yes I know she al’ays hated me! But she’s got her walking papers at sun-up, I’ll pay a girl fifty cents a week to do my work, and I know I’ll save it in what *she* would lose me in waste and broken dishes, the careless good-for-nothing!’

‘I am gratified, dear Mrs. Power, to see you view this matter in its proper light. A great deal of domestic mischief has often come from having too pretty a servant about the house!’

‘Yes, I need not be told that; and now I’m to be married again, I dont mean to have it thrown up at me.’

‘Is the poor-house near by?’

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`Just at the end o' the town, in the old field. Its an old brick house with no fence, and rags stuck in the windows. She'll have to work there, and wear rags. She dont take away from here any thing but what she has on her back that's poz. I giv' her a nice calico gown a month ago as good as new. I and Jenny only had worn it a year a piece, and I'll take it back again.'

`Had she no clothes when she came to you?'

`No yes some child's clothes all worn out by her long ago. All there is belonging to her here, is an old trunk up garret, I keep my piller-cases in. She dont get *that*.'

`Now, let me say a word to you Mrs. Powers! This young girl has, you tell me, been long an expense to you and given you no return.'

`Nothin' but imperdence,' answered the woman, with a lie on her lips that even *her* malicious heart condemned her for.

`It is right and needful for your wedded peace, that you send her away '

`She goes,' interrupted the widow with pertinacity.

`And should go! But if you take her to the work-house, will you be remunerated by the selectmen for all you have done for her?'

`I ought to be, that's clear, but I know I could'nt get a cent.'

`Probably not; but it is, nevertheless, just, that you should have some compensation by means of her.'

`That is true and what I have said,' she answered at once recurring to Fanny's hair, which she had made the basis of her hopes of gain out of her.

`Now let me, since you have decided to part with her, propose a plan by which you will be profited.'

`I had a plan and if it had not been for ' here she hesitated to divulge it to him.

`This is what I would suggest. Be so good, Mrs. Power, as to oblige me by accepting this half eagle as a pocket piece. This is my plan,' he continued as the widow with a brightening eye, took the gold coin and said `oh, you are too free, sir.'

`But had I not best close that stair door, I thought I heard a listener!'

`It's only the cat. There's no body up there but that Fan, and she is in my room asleep with the door shut. If she has been eves-droppin' tehn she knows what's in store for her. Let me catch her listening! But I will see, for I did think I heard something; and here's the cat by my rocker!'

With this, the widow caught up the candle and hastened up stairs and entered her chamber. The door was, indeed, just ajar, but Fanny was lying upon the straw mattress at the foot of the bed apparently in profound sleep. The widow looked at her a moment shedding the glare of the light upon her lovely features, and waving it across her deeply fringed eye-lids; and watching for a moment the soft, regular heaving of her bosom, seemed satisfied that she slept.

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‘It was not you at any rate, Miss, and well for you it was'nt. Sleep on for this is your last night in this house! Here, as she was turning away, her eyes were attracted by her glorious hair which covered the coarse bolster with a cloud of brightness and beauty. ‘Yes, and you shall not take that head of hair with you; if any body is going to profit by it, I'll be the one. The selectmen 'll be sure to shave it, and sell it, and I'll get the start on 'em. It comes off every curl of it this night before I sleep and while she is sunk so sound!’ With this resolution she closed and fastened the door and returned to the room below.

‘It was'nt her it must ha' been the wind,’ said she smiling, and closing also the stair door and re-seating herself in her redbaize rocking chair.

‘Well, this is my plan, Mrs. Power. In Boston there is a female friend of mine, a nice, respectable person, who is a French mantuamaker. With my recommendation she would take this young girl Fanny off your hands, and apprentice her.’

‘That would be too good for the proud upstart beauty. It would be just what she would like!’

‘Mrs. Fontan is a severe mistress; and besides my good Mrs. Power, the liking or the contrary of the girl, could have no weight with you, so long as you profited by the arrangement. And besides, it were safer to have her quite removed from the vicinity, for your future husband would not be quite beyond temptation even where she sent to the work-house’ If the widow had been a more penetrating person, she must here have seen instantly through Hammond Bramhall's motives; for in his eagerness to strengthen his argument he advanced one too many, and too transparent a one, for any optics but those which like the widows', were blinded by jealousy.

‘That's true,’ she exclaimed with great positiveness; ‘but the profit, Mr. , what shall I call your name?’

‘Hammond Jupiter Ammon, you may call me, ma'm.’

‘Seems to me I've heard the name before, sir.’

‘Yes, ma'm, no doubt; its very old and respectable name, I assure you.’

‘I don't doubt it, Mr. Ammon, you has the appearance of a gentleman yourself.’

‘Thank you, ma'm.’

‘As I am saying, Mr. Ammon, how is Fanny's goin' to this Mrs. Fountain, to benefit me for all my ten years charity? a bargain's a bargain you know, Mr. Ammon, and where money's between, words is no bones if they isn't to the purpose.’

‘You are quite right, Mrs. Power. So let us discuss the matter in a business way. If you will agree to surrender Fanny to Mrs. Fontan, I will place in your hands twenty dollars now, this moment, and twenty dollars when she leaves in the stage to-morrow afternoon for I shall make it a point to see her into the coach for town, and give her a note with the address of the lady.’

‘Done,’ exclaimed the widow, slapping her hand upon her knee with the emphasis of an old turf-better.

‘There are twenty dollars, madam!’ said the triumphant young man, opening his pocket-book. ‘Current notes you see. Tomorrow I shall leave the getting her consent to you.’

‘That I'll get, for go she shall; what I fear is she'll be to ready.’

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`So much the better then. You care not for this so that you are the gainer. I can assure you she will not find her lot changed for the better.'

`No that she wont! I have al'ays been like a mother to her.'

`We now understand each other, Mrs. Power,' said Hammond significantly, and rising up.

`Yes twenty now and twenty when she gets ready to take the stage.'

`Precisely. And, Mrs. Power, you must let her have her trunk and what clothes she has got, for I would like she should make a decent appearance, till' she can improve her wardrobe.'

`Don't you think you ought to allow me a little for the trunk and two new good as new gowns, and a straw bonnet and such thing's, I've given her off and on,' said the money craving widow, who was now sufficiently made aware by the large *douceur* he had so freely placed in her hands, what motive prompted this exhibition of interest for Fanny; but this conviction, which should have awakened any womanly feeling in her heart, produced no impression inspired no wish to avert her fate! Cupidity and avarice destroyed in her every better sentiment. Perhaps, had not the possession of so much money dazzled her, she would have refused participation in such a negotiation. But as it was, she drove the troublesome thoughts, her discovering of his probable intentions awoke in her, quite from her mind and let her covetousness take the reins of her guilty spirit and drive rough-shod over her conscience.

Hammond smiled scornfully at her suggestion and gave her, or, rather, flung her a sovereign.

`There!'

But the widow had not done yet. Gold only made her more covetous for gold. One thing more, Mr. Ammon! `You know I said as how I had a plan to get something back for all I had done for Fanny.'

`Yes,' answered the young man briefly and impatiently.

`Well you know how much and how long her hair is! a yard long if its an inch, and so much she can't find a comb to keep up only the longest part of it, while the shorter curls go down all about her shoulders. Well Mr. Tony Taft the barber offered me five dollars for it!'

`Good God! you did not have such a thought as that of cutting it,' exclaimed Hammond with indignant surprise: for the extraordinary beauty of Fanny's hair had not escaped his practiced eye.

`What would a body do, Mr. Ammon. Five dollars is five dollars, and the girl had no business with such a head o' hair. It had better been cut off to make curls for ladies, for it only made her vain.'

`And well might she be vain of it. I cannot be too thankful to you for not committing such an act.'

`But, Mr. Ammon,' she persevered, as he was leaving the `sanctus', `you know five dollars is five dollars! and as Fanny's hair is at this very minute just as good as a five dollar gold piece if I should cut it off and sell it to a barber in Boston '

`You don't mean to say, woman, you have still any such intention as you have named!' he said sternly.

`Why, if I let it stay on, it will be as good as a dead loss of five dollars; so sir, if you care about it perhaps you would be willin' to give me the five dollars I could get for it. You see its a business operation, Mr. Ammon.

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Another five will make the whole sum just fifty!

Hammond came near swearing out roundly in his indignation at this proposition, but checking himself, lest, making her angry, he should lose all the advantage he had gained, he quietly laid another gold piece in her hand, saying:

‘Now do not fail me to-morrow, Mrs. Power!’

‘No; you may trust me, Mr. Ammon,’ she replied with a smile.

He then left the room, full of the joyous anticipation of soon entrapping the beautiful girl in the snare he was setting for her, and again sought his chamber. Mrs. Power remained a few moments where he had left her standing, and then finding the house still again, she closed both doors of her sanctus and opened a bureau and took out a small trunk, with which she sat down, placing it upon her knees. It seemed weighty, and on her unlocking it it proved to be half full of silver and bank notes, nicely done up in parcels, and labelled 5's, 10's and 20's. She gazed upon her little Bank of treasure with a delighted eye, and then upon the several sums held in her hand, which she had received from Hammond Bramhall. Inspired by the gains of the evening, she resolved before adding them to her horde, to count over all the silver and see how much she possessed. At once she began the pleasing task, and in a few minutes she had so completely transfused her soul into the little piles of metal she had placed in columns around the edge of a chair, that she was lost to all external things; and the first intimation that she had of her earthly existence was the sudden sinking and expiring of the candle in its socket, leaving her and her gold and silver in the dark.

‘Fanny! you Fan, you! get up and go to the kitchen and make me a light,’ she screamed, fearing to move lest she should overthrow her piles of money, and scatter her bank notes. ‘I say, Fanny Power Fan devil, get up, you jade, and get a candle and light it!’

There was no answer, and the widow, boiling over with wrath, withdrew herself as carefully as her resentment would let her, from the midst of her money, and felt her way to the stair door, which she opened with a bang backwards, and again called. The silence was as profound as before.

‘I'll wake you up with a vengeance to it,’ she muttered, going into the bar and taking up a large water-pitcher, filled, with which she picked her way back again, and mounted the stairs. She threw wide the door of the chamber, and making one step forward dashed the water upon Fanny's bolster. There was no movement no sound that followed this copious bath, and with a half-misgiving of the truth, the widow felt down and found the mattress unoccupied.

With a shriek between rage and astonishment, mixed with not a little vexation, at having drowned the bed to no end, she shuffled and searched about the dark room, felt underneath the bed, and groped in the closet, all the time calling her, and overloading her with abuse. At length she stumbled against the window, which was open, and out of which she had nearly pitched before she could recover herself.

‘Then she's gone!’ she gasped; ‘gone out of the window, and I fool enough to leave it unfastened! but who ever supposed the thing had sense enough to run away? She overheard us talking down stairs, and now I know, the deceitful thing, it was her we heard! Feign sleep! Could she have jumped two stories to the ground? Somebody has helped her, and I would wager it is the fellow that wrote her that billet! I don't believe she's any better than she should be! But perhaps she'll come back again! I'll have her found if I search the country! Twenty dollars gone at once if I don't find her! The ungrateful thing!’

Again the widow made a groping and more careful search of the room, and became perfectly satisfied that she had disappeared. She then stumbled her way down stairs to the kitchen, and got a light, and her inspection of the

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chamber not only removed all doubt, but showed her that Fanny had dressed herself and taken her bonnet and shawl, but leaving every other article of apparel. Her first impulse was to go and call Hammond, and tell him of her flight; but the fear of his instantly demanding the money withheld her. She therefore resolved to delay until morning, trusting that she might be heard from, and she turned to go down to look after her money. As she did so her eye fell on a sheet of paper lying beneath the window, which Fanny had probably dropped in her flight. She sprung and took it up, hoping it would reveal something. It did not reveal what she hoped, but it revealed Fanny's own spirit, and showed that even in her bondage she could find, perhaps on the Sabbath day, moments for expressing her young heart's thoughts. There were several pieces written in a very fine delicate hand, just such a one as she would be supposed to write. The widow took the foolscap sheet down stairs with her, and with a candle to her nose, began to pour over it with as much intelligence as a monkey would a prayer book. We give these verses to show the character of her mind. The first piece was a song, which was entitled, 'DREAM-LAND BIRD.' 'A dream-land bird dwells among other birds, On earth she buildeth her nest; She wingeth her way through the skies all day, At night seeketh earth to rest. 'I, like that bird, from the dream-land come, On earth I have builded my nest. And my soul all day o'er the earth soars away, At night seeking earth to rest.'

By 'night' the imaginative girl doubtless meant the grave! The thought is very beautiful.

Then followed the following scraps, as if poems began, or thoughts penned as they rose in her mind:

O, Thou! on whose bosom Creation reclineth, (!) Where, light of thy glory, Sun, moon and stars shineth! Where lieth the blue clouds, Where wild clouds are wreathing, Where 'The grave open softly, When I must be dying; The future be ready, To which I am hieing; The Past know me Future, *Its* nature forever 'The lady was fair, the palace was bright, And *yet* none saw the lady after that night.'

Be it said, in passing, that the widow thought she comprehended this last line, and she sighed heavily over her twenty dollars! The next scrap she took to be a sort of poetical farewell from Fanny. Her comments would spoil our page.

'Yet no more there is she combing her long wild hair, Yet no more there will her dove-eyes lift in prayer.'

Then followed, written cross-wise the leaf the following religious poem: THE SPIRIT OF THE EARTH-CHILD. 'On earth all fair things fade away! O how thee down fair child of clay, Before the Everlasting throne In ceaseless prayer unto the One. He will keep thee fresh and bright In his nightless, shadeless light; In innocence, O, soar above, Rest on His bosom who is LOVE! Low worship thou, as doth the flower, Whose life on earth is but an hour, In all its fragrance, all its bloom It bows submissive to its doom! All things upward do aspire, Water, air, and earth and fire, Keep thy spirit free and bright. And upward too shall be thy flight! On earth all things fade away, Then bow thee down, fair child of clay, And He the Everlasting One Will raise thee to his glorious throne!'

Then was a fragment of repose, which we copy, with the same object we have named, the illustration of the mental and spiritual character of Fanny.

'I bound it up with fresh Spring Larch, tied in with a bouquet of Hearts'-case, buttercups, and fragrant leaves. I laid it on my pillow when I went to my night-rest, for there was language in it to the spirit I most love. The leaves were delicate and soon withered! My love is delicate; like the flowers will it fade quickly! Eternity only knows. Time will reveal it.

I know not what are Time flowers, and what are eternal. All I know is that many I deemed heavenly and eternal lie scentless and sear around me. Am I looking on their scattered petals as a child on the faded flowers of earth, innocent, full of life, and hoping for immortality, without need of them?'

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There is a deep tenderness of feeling in all this, on Fanny's paper; and these few passages of the Diary of her heart shows how delicate and pure was her spirit. In every line is discovered that fair and fanciful and gentle character which the observing Gardner Sears had at once appreciated, and had charmed his imagination, not leaving untouched his heart. The ease of versification and ever buoyant out-springing of the spirit of this lovely girl into poetical expression, cannot but surprise all who have glanced over her careless and stolen-time compositions. It is a proof that true genius, rising superior to circumstances, will always soar to its native skies and assert its celestial origin. Although there is plainly wanting grasp of thought, sequency and melody in these manifestations of herself we have discovered, yet there is evident by a true poetic spirit, and an originality that is charmingly fresh. Her words are not answers to other's thoughts, but thoughts themselves. This is the peculiarity. But what has become of the lovely poet all the while that we are looking over the mystified widow's shoulder, reading and freely making our comments upon her artless compositions!

CHAPTER VIII.

'Submission to tyranny is base: escape from it is noble.'

'I hate to follow fashions.' 'I know thou dost even in spelling.' 'Marry! I would that letters could be bought all writ A ducat for a dozen. I never take a pen but I'd rather hang Some men ha' brains for't not I.'

The character of Fanny is not a creation of the fancy, but a reality; the fragments we have given are not our own but hers. It may be called an unnatural character because it is inartificial; but mankind are so artificial and, nature so rare that the natural is called odd. Oddity is a trait of childhood in the adult. In this sense our heroine, Fanny was odd. If her own life had mingled more with her daily life, she would have had more art, (for Life is Art) but less nature. And it only now remained that she should be adopted into the family of friendship and domesticated around some hearth-stone of Love, to make her live less in the Spirit and more in the heart; in a word, to become a Child of Earth full of all affection and trustfulness.

Fanny had sought her humble pillow that night at an earlier hour than usual, by command of her mistress, for as this was the last night of her courtship with Master Tobitt, she did not care to be interrupted or observed. Fanny lay awake restless a long time, and every time she closed her eyes the large, black soul-penetrating gaze of Brentnal Bramhall was full upon her; for, though this young gentleman believed to the contrary, there was something in his low and deformed stature, his massive brow and large intellectual head, and in the quiet, yet glowing look of his deep, deep eyes that strongly affected her imagination, and impressed her with a strange feeling of awe and tenderness. She feared, repulsively, Hammond; her heart drew sympathizingly towards his brother. It was the intuitive recognition in him of a spirit loving the inner life. She now could not close her eyes but she thought of him with pity and awe, and then his full, dark gaze would fix upon her soul. At length other images flittered through her mind, each less pleasing than the other, till her mind seemed to have wandered from her own proper heaven of thought into a region of evil spirits. She started from her bed with fear, and softly opening the door, as if yearning for the presence of the living. There she stood upon the floor re-assured by the sound of footsteps below; they were these of Hammond as he entered the 'sanctus' of the widow. Conversation followed, but Fanny listened not, but pleasant sights having been presented to her fancy, she introverted her mind to be happy among them. Sometime passed when her own name, distinctly pronounced, started her ear. She recalled her thoughts and attentively hearkened. The door at the foot of the stairs was open, and the conversation between Hammond and her mistress about herself, reached her, every word. She listened with breathless attention. She recognized the voice of the young man, and heard his gross allusions to her in connection with the name of the widow's future husband. She then heard the widow's threats to send her to the work-house, and her heart sank within her with shame and bitterness. Dreadful as her present condition was she trembled at the alternative; for she knew that the poor-house of Hillside was a prison of labor, and harsh treatment from a brutal overseer, to its pitiable inmates; she knew disease, infamy and shame were there, and her pure spirit shrunk, her human nature recoiled at the idea of the companionship. She listened still for she could not move away from the spot. She

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heard again the fearful denunciations of the widow, and she knew that her fate was sealed. She trembled like a leaf and clasping her hands, bowed her head upon her knees in silent woe. All was darkness and the shadow of death. Into the far depths of her being she sent her spirit, and sought for light and peace, and found them, and finding them found God. The vision strengthened her faith, and hope rested again undisturbed at her heart. She lifted up her head; but fearing to hear more, she returned to her couch with wild, unformed notions of flight she knew not whither; but flight!

The door jarred as she closed it, and this was the sound that arrested the attention of Hammond. She heard his exclamation, and pale as death she threw herself upon her low bed. At length she heard her mistress step upon the stairs, and instantly she assumed the attitude of deep sleep. This was not deception, but the instinct of self-preservation. With extraordinary composure she endured the close examination of her mistress, and then fell upon her ears again the terrible threat, that that night her long beautiful hair was to be sacrificed.

The idea was anguish to her. She loved her hair. The thought that no more should she

‘Comb her long wild hair,’ was a keen affliction.

This drew her to life and to the love of life. She was an ‘earthchild,’ in all the passionate love she had for her bright tresses. In her own words for *we* have since discovered another roll of verses by the window, that escaped the widow’s eyes.

‘Oft would she weep, oft would she laugh, O’er her long flowing hair, Mysterious link, that bound her soul Unto a home more fair.’

Nature and its affections were revived, and a thought became active and preservative. She thought less of the poor-house, and more of her hair. But both ideas were terrible; and, united, they drew out from their repose the energy and decision of her character. Something like this was wanting to achieve this result. She might always have lived in life ‘a bird from dream-land,’ and only a bird, in the air and sunlight ever, but for the storm that should drive her to earth. With her terrestrial flight now came earthfeelings, and the hopes of earth entered her heart. Mere fear of unhappiness could not have done this in a mind like hers, which flow ever inward from outward affections and there found peace; the menace of the poor-house! no! But the deprivation of a part of herself the severance of the link that ‘bound her soul Unto a home more fair,’ this was not mere unhappiness from external circumstances for these she knew how to endure. But what menaced her was a marring and deforming of the beauty of her form of Life; it was separating from her the feature and expression of a grace, in the mind, of which her hair was the outward and glorious manifestation.

Her danger awakened all her mental activity, and gave a unity and effect to her thoughts as she surveyed her situation. The idea of flight had taken firm hold upon her mind, and after she had weighed rapidly but with equity her relations and duties, she felt that no tie that she ought not to sever, bound her to her mistress. Nay she, herself, had decreed the disunion by her decision to send her away to be a dependant upon the town’s charity. Her decision was made. She would fly.

With remarkable firmness and composure, showing how nervous and resolute was her native character, now just breaking the chrysalis that had so long enclosed it, she rose and dressed herself in her neatest calico gown, and going to the closet took her bonnet and shawl and put them on, and taking only a handkerchief in the little reticule which had belonged to her mother, and which she had always religiously preserved, she went to the window and lifted it up noiselessly. She then looked down to the far ground, for this was not the window with the shed beneath it, before mentioned, for she now occupied the widow’s chamber. She had to look steadily before she could discover the ground, for it was at least fifteen feet below, and the night was dark. It was the stable-yard which she overlooked. She listened and all was still, for it was nearly half-past eleven o’clock, and all were in bed except the widow and Hammond Brentnal, the low hum of whose voices could be heard below; for he was now making his

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proposition to her with reference to her apprenticeship with Madam Fontan. But Fanny heard nothing of this.

The window was high and yet it was the only way by which she could escape. She was about to trust herself to the dangerous descent, when she luckily recollected that a bed-cord hung in the closet. She soon unwound it, and passing the two ends round a post of the bed, she let them drop to the ground, and felt that they both touched it, for the line was full thirty feet long. Trembling, hesitating, yet firm in her resolution, she carefully committed her weight to it, holding a cord in each hand; and letting it slide through her hands, she reached the ground in safety. She immediately drew the cord down, and folding it together laid it upon the door-step near her, and then, without looking behind her, she fled from the yard into the village street. Here the silence, the deep shadows of the tall elms around, the singular sensation of being alone in a place where in day all is men and motion, filled her with awe. A mind like hers must ever be susceptible to the solemn and lonely in nature. She looked up to the stars and their familiar, watching eyes, re-assured her and gave her confidence. So she walked on; timidly yet onward; starting and shrinking at the sounds in the trees, yet onward! Whither? That she knew not, but that she was walking in the direction of Boston. There was an undefined notion in her mind, that there she should find protection work employment of some kind with kindness? And so she turned her steps thitherward. She had been told too, that her parents had come from Boston; and in her thoughts it always had associations like those with home; and fast, and fearing, she travelled on through the long village street, till the lonely country stretched out shadowy and indistinct around. The way was lonely, yet she felt not near so much alone as in the village; for she could see the heavens above and all around her, and she felt a companionship in the stars. Had she never thought of Gardner Sears, and his offer of protection in this hour of her sudden flight? Yes daily had he mingled in her thoughts, nightly in her dreams; till she had him so much in her mind, he promised soon to take a place in her heart. She had got to regard him as her only friend, and this word became associated with his face in her thoughts. She thought of him too in the moment of her flight, in the agitation of her thoughts preceding it. But his existence was as a dream to her; he had come and gone, she knew not whence nor whither! Yet she felt he would redeem his pledge if he were there. But she knew not where to find him; and it was too late to think of applying to the barber. So she went forward committing herself unto the protection of God, whose eye was upon her in kindness and love.

The ensuing morning the widow was up early, and looking out of the window she saw the prints of Fanny's feet on the ground, and discovered the cord laid on the steps. The mode of her escape was now plain to her. She was convinced she should hear nothing more from her, at least, for the present; and her reflections were by no means of the most amiable character. To conceal the fact of her flight from Hammond Bramhall, was impossible, and after a good deal of delay and hesitation, she reluctantly took him aside as he came down to breakfast, and made it known to him.

'Come hither,' he said hastily, leading the way into her private room and closing the door, while she took a seat almost overcome with her vexation at what had happened. 'Do you mean to say that she had actually fled from the house?' he demanded with incredulity and astonishment.

'Yes last night let herself down by a bed-cord from the window! I found the bed-cord on the steps.'

'Can she have gone far?'

'She took her bonnet and shawl and bag. I'm sorry enough to have to tell you of it, Mr. Jupiter, but it an't none o' my fault; for who could expect a girl to jump out of a two story window in the night. But the twen '

'What time was it?'

'Near on the twelve o'clock, for she was gone when I went to bed.'

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`Then she overheard us, and I was right in suspecting a listener to our conversation! She has fled to escape the work-house. But you should at once have informed me of it.'

`She had flown, and I didn't like to disturb a gentleman at night; and I believed she'd be back by morning; but seeing she kept away, I concluded to tell you. But the twen '

`Confound the twenty dollars, Madam! I shall not ask you to return what you have; and will double it if you find where she is. Has she any friends to go to?'

`Not a soul, 'except she's run off with that young fellow that writ her the note.'

`What note?' demanded Hammond.

`Here it is! It was writ a fortnight ago by a young gentleman that took it upon himself to help bring a pail o' water, as if he had nothing better to do, than interfering with servant girls in their work. I found it in her reticule hid under her bolster.'

Hammond eagerly took Gardner's note from her and read it with a high color on his cheek.

`I think I have reason to know this hand-writing,' he said growing as suddenly pale as he had become red? `Did she meet him.'

`I could never get the deceitful thing to tell; but I dont b'lieve she did, for she could'nt, I kept her so close; and now you have seen I had good reason to watch her. She's gone off with him.'

`No I cannot think so, if this is the person I think it to be. Was he about my height and age, dressed in black with a full hazel eye and dark hair, and handsome brown whiskers?'

`That's the man to a hair!'

`Then he has not eloped with her! Yet it is barely possible he may know something of her. He may have given her his protection. If so I may as well give up the matter,' he said with a dark frown. `Yet I will not, by Heaven! He shall not triumph over me a second time. Listen, widow and be discreet! The person who I suspect at the bottom of this affair, is a young man of fortune and great probity of character, a virtuous, moral youth, as the world goes,' added he sneeringly; `his name is Gardner Sears, and he resides with his parents on their property near the village of R nine miles north of this. If she left you by his instigation she is with his mother and under her protection.'

`With his mother!'

`He would take a young woman no where else,' answered Hammond, smiling contemptuously, `for he is a very discreet young gentleman. But he is romantic, and a little inclined to do things out of the usual way. He probably was struck with the beauty of Fanny, inquired her history, and with a sort of fanciful chivalry, resolved to free her from her servitude.'

`He better keep his chivalry to himself,' said the widow tartly. `But I did'nt never make no servant of her, Mr. Ammon, that's a mistake,' she added coloring with a guilty look.

`Well, perhaps he thought so! but he would have taken a different method to effect *his* object it seems to me. He would have been more likely to have come in a coach with his mother and asked her from you! I must confess I am puzzled. If I could get some clue! But, as I was about to say, you must by some means ascertain whether she is at Dr. Sears' country house. Send some confidential person as a spy. I will incur the expense. In the meanwhile I

will make inquiries on the Boston road.'

'Yes, for runaways always take to cities,' said the widow. The inquiries and persevering search of the two parties for the fugitive through all that day were unavailing. Hammond had at breakfast excused himself to his brother on the plea of being under the necessity of returning to Boston, and Brentnal went on alone to the trouting pond. Hammond rode on horseback several miles on every road about, and made inquiries at the toll-houses and of way side people. No one had seen a young girl of such a description walking; nor had any wagon or carriage passed the gates, containing one. He had rode in person as far as the gate to the grounds of Dr. Sears and sent in a stable boy who had accompanied him, and knew Fanny, to spy about the house, but all in vain. Nothing was heard from her up to sun-set, when he returned to the Inn. This was the widow's wedding night; but on his reporting his total want of success, she felt almost too much vexed to get married. Nevertheless the nuptials took place, and the widow became Mrs. Tobitt. Hammond was present at the ceremony, for he lingered at the Inn hoping some intelligence might be brought there of the beautiful runaway; for the rumor of her escape had early in the day reached every ear in Hillside. Every one talked about it, but in truth no body wondered at it! the manner of her coming among them was then talked over, and the sudden death of her parents was alluded to, and the mystery that had ever since hung around her birth, which now seemed to impress the good people of Hillside for the first time.

Among those, out of the Inn, who was most interested in the flight of Fanny, was our friend Tony Taft, the little barber. As the confidential agent of 'the young doctor,' this intelligence of the disappearance of the person he was instructed and paid to hold ward and watch over, not a little disconcerted him. He received the first intimation of it from Simpson Snip the tailor, who had the secret from the widow herself, when he went in to take his morning dram; but with the caution not to speak of it, as they hoped to find her yet; for the widow well knew the whole town, as soon as it was known, would say it was hard treatment and that she was served right to lose her! Snip, however, knew himself to be a person of no sort of consequence in Hillside, and knew that the possession of a secret for the time, gives a man vast importance, for it is superiority of knowledge united to the power of gratifying every body's curiosity. He therefore did not delay at the bar after swallowing his dram, to ask the widow for 'one leettle more just to wash the other down,' but shuffled out. The first place he made for was his own shop to exchange his old straw for his beaver, and to tell his journeyman and two apprentices. He then made an arrow line for Tony Taft's barber's shop, stopping an old woman, and a little boy, to whisper it with embellishment in their ears, telling the latter to run home and tell his mother as fast as he could. As he entered the barber's shop, Tony, at the instant had John Hammersmith the blacksmith by the nose, and was shaving with many a flourish in the air, his black chin.

'Tony Taft John I've got something that 'll astonish you! never such news in Hillside since the 'lopement o' the squires' niece with that young Boston lawyer! I've got the only news! It'll astonish you you see if't dont. Fanny's runaway! she jumped out of her chamber window last night, and has gone off to Boston! a carriage and six horses waited at the corner round by Jason's wheelwright shop! and a young gentleman in gold watch and straps jumped out! and she jumped in! and whisk! off they flew over the turnpike like the wind!' these were Snip's embellishments being a tailor of excellent fancy.

Tony Taft jumped at the words 'Fanny's run away,' and sliced a piece from the Smith's chin as large as his thumb nail! the blacksmith roared, and aiming a tremendous blow at the unfortunate barber, would have spoiled his shaving, had not Tony nimbly sprung aside and let the fist take effect on Snip; which it did to the great astonishment and discomposure of this gentleman, who found himself flying in a series of involuntary summersets across the barber's shop, knocking over a wig-block and a chair in his proceedings, and finally landing in a tub of second-hand water under the sink. This success restored the Smith to good humor; and after laughing with a gigantic succession of roars, he sat down again and suffered Tony to staunch the blood and stick a patch of court-plaster on his face. The tailor picked the various pieces of himself up, and shaking the water out, put himself together and went limping out of the shop, deliberately resolving never to venture within reach of a blacksmith's sledge-fist again, to the longest day of his mortal existence, and nevertheless he went shuffling about

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with his secret till it was as well known in the village as the approaching marriage of the widow.

Tony in the meanwhile said nothing; but as soon as the blacksmith put on his coat and went out, he put on his own, and locking his shop, hastened across the street, to learn the particulars from the widow. His visit, he saw, would be coldly received, and to his first wondering inquiry, 'why, when did it happen, widow Power?' he got a reply that satisfied him he could get no information from that quarter. He left the inn and flew from group to group, where ever he supposed the villagers were talking about it, and grew nervous and fidgety, and altogether very much troubled in his mind. That Fanny should fly and he not know of it. What would the 'young doctor' say? 'He must know it,' he exclaimed as he thought of him; and he immediately repaired to his shop to write him a letter, as he had been instructed to do in case any thing interesting occurred in relation to Fanny. Mr. Taft was not much given to epistolary composition, and therefore kept no writing table on his premises. He now swept aside some old razors, shaving boxes, strops, and other rubbish, from a side table, and took an ink-stand from the drawer. The ink was dried up in it, and he went to his hot water kettle, and pouring in a few drops, moistened it; and then stopping it with his thumb he shook it till it produced a weak-looking blueish liquid. He then hunted up and was successful in finding a stump of a pen, which he nibbed with an old razor. He then took a chair and squared himself to the table, dipped his pen into his ink, and then discovered that he had no paper before him. He again rummaged the drawer, but it afforded no paper; it had done its duty in producing an inkstand and a pen! After looking into every drawer in the shop, he finally was so successful as to discover a sheet of ruled foolscap placed underneath some fancy articles in his shop window. This he abstracted, dusted, and made smooth, and resumed his seat. Fortunate would it now have been for the barber, if pens, taken in the hand, could be made to do the work of writing without the help of brain. Tony never knew what a man had brains for, till he set himself down to write this letter! He finally put himself desperately to the task, and after three hours produced the following epistle:

Ilsedd, – *Sap Timber 01 180042* dockturr, Sirr

teryble materss iss hapendd sinss you wass heer vitch iss wot korses me phor too tak mi penn inn han witch iss a badd wunn andd so i hop youle xkus thee spelinn andd itts thiss wot's hapendd Phany hass loped andd I cutt Gon Hamersmith chin andd he nokt Snipp our tayllur ovr inntu mi slopp tubb but ile tel you thee pertiklars ov wots hapendd Snipp tels itt furs tu mee andd i cuts Gon the smyth andd hee noks himm ovurr phannys run awa andd noe mystak cozz thee roape wos foun she hangd hurselff with oute ov thee widers 2 stora windur and itt wos foun ther andd shee wosnt foun andd thatts wots hapendd andd itts inn ev boddis mouth andd noe bodi noes wots beekum ov hur, norr i Snipp sedd a koche tuk hurr off, butt thatts wun ov Snippes lise andd hes a grat lierr andd dyrnks vich i donte, nott nevr taikin butt wun tum'lar ov agg-popp no twass jinger popp, wich gutt inter mi hedd wich iss troo forr i sorr hur traks undur thee windurr andd thee bedd kordd twass 12 larste nite wen shee runn awa andd itss nou 01 inn the phoarnun i maik no dela butt rite rite orf hopin yool com rite doune orr rite orr heare phrom phahny phor thars no mistaik shes sloapt.

wich i amm yures ter kumarndd

Toney taft.

P P S docktur thars noe mistaik phannys orf docktur i dreckts too Bostown cozz thatts writt with yur naim onn thee paypr yoo leftt phannys orf andd no mystaik vich iss onakkountable ass yoo mustt thynk soo yoorself phor i seed thee roap xkuse mistaiks coz mi penn haz gott too splitts inn itt T. t.

This elaborate and learned epistle was then folded up by its successful perpetrator in the shape powders are put up by physicians, the two ends lapped over and tucked one in the other. He found half of a wafer, with which he sealed it, and then hastened with it into the post office as the mail was just closing. He then waited until the stage came in, and watched the mail-bag put under the boot, after being assured by the post master that his letter was safely in it, for writing and sending off a letter was no ordinary every day affair with Tony Taft; and he felt

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disposed to see to the whole matter carefully himself, and when the stage started off he watched it with a species of pride, and an interest that it had never before awakened in his breast.

‘Now if that letter don't fetch the young doctor I don't know what will,’ he said to himself as the stage passed out of sight; and entering his shop he began to hone a razor, thinking sadly upon the departure of Fanny, for whom there is no doubt the little barber entertained an inkling of tender regard.

In the meanwhile Gardner Sears had been hastening on his return towards Boston, where he arrived the morning of the day on which Tony's epistle was mailed. His first step was to go to the custom house with the note that he had received from Captain Wallis. He delivered it to its address and anxiously awaited the reply of the officer.

‘There may have been such baggage as is here described, sir,’ he replied, ‘previous to my being in office; but there is nothing of the kind now in store; for I made, not long since, a personal examination of all the rooms under my supervision. There was a store-house containing articles left in the custom house, burned a few years ago, with its contents. Perhaps the baggage you seek may have shared its fate.’

This reply was a through extinguishment of hope of any revelations from that quarter, and in a sort of despair he turned and walked slowly away. Yet he felt he had gained much that he had been seeking for. He had ascertained that Fanny's parents were cultivated persons, and had moved in good society. This evidence, however, she herself, in person and mind, bore sufficiently strong testimony to. He, however, did not yet give up the hope of establishing her birth. The idea of absolutely going to London and calling on Messrs. Morton & Co., where her father had taken passage, entered his energetic mind; but he resolved first to ascertain what evidence the trunk at the inn afforded. He determined, therefore, though near night, at once to proceed to Hillside in a private conveyance; for certain fears or presentiments touching Fanny, originating from his solicitude for her safety when he suffered himself to reflect upon her unhappy situation, had clouded his mind. He was passing the post office, and entering he inquired for letters. He found two from his mother, one from a friend, and a fourth was handed him by the clerk with a smile. He read the address with astonishment and curiosity.

‘Phor thee yung dockter Mist Gardnur Sears Eskqr

Bostun Sitty M.

He examined the post-mark. It bore date that same day, and was mailed at Hillside. Who his correspondent was came at once to his mind, and he opened the letter with a misgiving at his heart.

‘Fled!’ he repeated with a pale cheek as he reached the intelligence conveyed by Tony. ‘Whither can she have gone?’ He continued to wade through the mazes of the barber's double-headed pen perpetrations, to the close. The matter was too grave for him to smile at the manner. There was but one idea in his thoughts. ‘The beautiful, unprotected, artless girl, had flown from tyranny, none knew whither! And she had disappeared only the night before. With his imagination filled with every supposable evil that might happen to her, he resolved at once to start for Hillside, and learn the facts more clearly, and then seek her. With this determination he hastened to a stable and ordered a fleet horse to be put into a buggy. In ten minutes afterwards he was trotting ten miles an hour across Craigie's bridge for the country.

CHAPTER IX.

‘His hands were rough with labor hard, His cheek was darkly brown'd But soft and gentle was his heart, Open to all around.’

The heroine of our tale we will now follow in her midnight flight, and through the adventures that it involved her

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in. She had proceeded about a league on her road from the village of Hillside, walking rapidly, yet ever and anon singing to beguile the loneliness of the way, when she suddenly saw a high gate before her closing up the road. By the side of it was a small dwelling, and a lamp burned in a nook by the gate-post. She stopped and deliberated a moment what to do, for she feared to climb it lest she should be discovered, and she wanted to conceal the way she had taken, fearing she might be pursued. The house was on one side of the gate like a wall, and a deep ditch and hedge was on the other. There was no way of progressing but getting over the gate. This she softly advanced to do, when the deep growl of a dog by the door of the house alarmed her, and caused her to retreat several paces into the darkness. She was perplexed but not disheartened; and was devising some plan to overcome the difficulty, when she heard behind her the rumbling of wagon wheels on the turnpike. She listened; and after a few moments was satisfied that they were coming towards the toll-gate.

'Now,' thought she to herself with hope and gladness; 'now will I try and secret myself behind this wagon when it stops here and so pass through this place. How loud it rumbles. It must be one of the large horse-wagons, that comes to Boston from the upper counties and Vermont, that I've seen stop at the Inn. If so the good wagoner will perhaps let me ride; for I am very tired, yet I could walk and run hours though, for liberty and happiness. But I know not if happiness be before me any more than behind me. I know I have liberty. But God is within and God is without, and all around me are his arms like a mother's! Hark! I hear the sharp crack of his whip, and the wheels roll round faster and louder. Now I hear the tramp of the horse's feet upon the hard pike; and there is the wagoner's voice cheering them up. Now I see the high white top it is a huge merchandize wagon, and will hide a dozen like me in its capacious bosom. I will steal along the hedge towards it, and get in unseen, behind, before it comes quite up to the light.'

It will be seen that Fanny evinces decision and invention under her difficulties, and acts for herself with no little judgment and forethought; thus showing that circumstances were only wanting to develop the sterling and the useful in her. With this resolution which she had just formed, she glided along the road-side in the shadow of some fragrant locust trees, and met the wagon, shrinking within the covert of the hedge as it rolled heavily and slowly past. It was drawn by four horses, and she could faintly distinguish the wagoner on his seat under the front part, and just within the canvass calash-shaped covering. As he rode by he commenced whistling an air, then widely popular among his class. He would whistle a few mellow and loud notes, and then alternate them with breaking out singing a line of the song in a hearty bluff voice, more meritorious for its sincerity than for its melody: 'Get out of the way, Old Dan Tucker, Out of the way out of the way.'

which significant words he repeated over and over in a sort of chorus, and then set to whistling the air again; and so he drove on towards the turnpike gate. Fanny knew by his free and joyous singing that he was kind and good-hearted, and she felt less timidity in following her resolution. She would have asked him to let her ride through, but instinctively dreaded a refusal.

As the wagon passed by she left her nook and lightly tripped after it. She reached it unseen, and then found it was so high, and leaned over so away from her, that she began to fear she should not be able to climb up. She, however, resolutely made the effort, and after three failures, succeeded in getting her hand hold of the top piece and lifting herself up. It was nearly empty and she hesitated as she surveyed its dark cavern before venturing into it. But she could plainly see the form of the driver at the other end against the sky, and knew that if he turned round he must in the same manner discover her; she therefore softly dropped herself into the wagon upon a heap of hay that the wagoner had stored behind for his horses. There was a warmth and comfort in the atmosphere inside, that was agreeable to her; for the morning air, it being past two o'clock, was chilly and damp, though she had not perceived it. There were a few packages of domestic cottons, some bales of sheeting, and two or three large boxes besides the bundle of hay. She lay down upon the hay, and just lifted her face above the cart to look out forward; for she felt anxious to get safely past the toll-gate; this barrier being to her imprisoned and fanciful mind, as terrible as an iron gate in the wall of some gigantic castle to the escaping prisoner. It filled her mind with all sorts of terrors, and her imagination invested the toll-keeper with the attributes of a Blue Beard, and his dog dignified into a lion, guarding the portal. As the wagon came near, the wagoner ceased his last burden of 'Old

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Dan Tucker, 'cracked his whip like the discharge of a rifle in the air, and shouted at the top of his voice,

'Ho, turnpike ho! Turn out good dad and open the gate, for I carry the fast mail! Hurry and unlock, for there's all Boston and the Post Office waitin' for me to get in! Turn out, uncle and unlock,' 'Get out o' the way Old

Whoa, oo! stand easy there, Tip and Ty, and dont be kissing and biting each other! Whay, I tell ye! cant ye stand easy.

'Get out o' the way Ol Dan Tu '

Here the toll house door opened, and an old man appeared in a white woolen night cap; putting his hand up to shade his eyes, he let his mouth grin open while he surveyed the vehicle. He then put a key to the lock and threw open the gate, saying,

'Is that you John; I thought I know'd your voice. You've made a quick trip up and back. Any news in your parts.'

'None, on'y our legislatur is put a tax of fourpencehappeney a head on babies.'

'You are al'ays at your quips, John,' said the old man smiling, taking the change he handed to him from the box, and examining it by the lantern. 'All right.'

'Whoa, come up! Get out o' the way Old Dan Tucker!' and laughing at the happy application of the words of the song to the old man, who jumped nimbly from under his wheels, he cracked loud his long whip and started of at a round, rumbling trot, shakng poor Fanny as she lay in the cart-tail, so that she had to hold on the side of the wagon, to keep from flying out of the wagon. He kept this pace about half a mile, till the horses came to the foot of a hill where he let them walk up, and at the top of his voice struck up a medley: 'Racoon and possum got in a fray, Fought all night until de nex' day. Get out o' the way old Dan Tucker Out o' the way 'I went down to Sandy Hook toder aternoon, An de fus man I met dere was ole Zip Coon. Old Zip Coon is a very larned scholar Old Zip Coon is a very larned scholar 'In old Kentuck in de aternoon, We sweep de floor wid a hickory broom, Oh clare de kitchen old folks, young folks ' 'A jay bird set on a hickory limb, He wink'd at me and I wink'd at him: I pick'd up a stone and I hit his shin Says he you better not do dat again. Get out o' the way old Dan

'What are you doing there, Ty,' he suddenly cried to his off leader: 'why dont you straiten the traces and pull steady: 'On de banks ob old Tar riber Is where libs my old Aunt Hannah.'

Here he continued his medley of scraps of songs, his clear manly yet something rude voice, ringing among the deep woods which covered the hill on either hand. Rude as it was Fanny, wearied, and invited to lie down by the warmth and security of her covert, was lulled to sleep by his melodies.

He continued to sing, and now and then to whistle, alternateing his pastime by calling and talking to his horses, until many miles had been passed over, and the long streets of a village traversed and left far behind, when the morning began to break in the east. He became silent while he observed the progress of the shadowy light along the east, and watched it diffuse itself up the sky, and gradually as it spread mellowing and blushing with a roseate suffusion. He walked his horses and gazed upon it as he rode, interested by the sight, which, ever renewed each morning, is never the same, and always glorious. The shrill cock was heard from the barn-yard; the stars slowly faded into the pearly sky, and the grey, soft twilight of morning began to reveal the scene around; fields wide extended; clumps of forests; farm-houses with smokeless chimneys; a distant spire and a wooded range of highland to the west. The birds began to sing in the yet dark boughs; clearer grew the light; brighter each moment shone the east; richer and deeper became its dyes; and all around was light, without a visible source. Up suddenly rose the sun, blazing with glory and asserted his empire.

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The wagoner let his gaze linger a moment till the disk of liquid gold rose unbroken by trees above the horizon, and then gathered up his reins saying,

`Now if that ant a sight fit for a mortal man, then I dont know what's handsome. Its a great exhibition, and what's better dont cost nothin. Well, babies,' he continued addressing his horses, prick up and push on, for there's a baiting place a mile ahead. And there's just a feed all round left in the wagon! *What! ho!* women and witches!' he exclaimed in thorough astonishment, as he discerned on looking back, Fanny fast asleep upon the hay; now if here an't a circumstance! A gal fast asleep in the tail o' my wagon. Gimminy and Jewsharps, what handsome hair! I wonder if she come out o' the sun. Now John Colton, you are a pretty gallant to have a gal sleeping all night for what you know, in your wagon, and you have nothing better to do than sing nigger songs to your four dumb brute horses. But how in all nature did she come in? I baited at Hillside and she wan't in then. But she's stirrin! There she shakes her curls off her face. What a beauty for sore eyes that is now. Them cheeks is a prettier sight than the rosy sky I've been looking at. If I ever seed such a handsome face as that afore, may I never see Windsor in Vermont again. It *is* a beauty and no beggerin.' Whoa! wo! Cant ye whoa-a! I must step back here and wake her up!

At this moment, as if in sleep conscious of the presence of eyes resting upon her and disturbed by their influence, she waked and looked around. Her first glance fell on the good natured, wondering, kind face of the wagoner! she seemed instantly to comprehend her situation.

`What, is it so soon day!' was her first exclamation.

`It is, pretty one,' answered John. His voice seemed to make her more fully conscious; and with a quick color and an alarmed, deprecating look, she said.

`Oh, sir, I beg you will forgive me! I was so fatigued last night, and there was no way I could get through the toll-gate. Indeed, sir, I did not mean to ride so far. I will get out and walk.'

`Dont be so frightened, Miss. I an't agoin'to hurt ye. So you got in at the toll-gate?'

`Yes sir but '

`No 'pologies. If you'd asked me I'd a let you ride close along side o' me and welcome. Its a wonder I did'nt see you; but I al'ays drives my horses with my face to 'em. Where are you goin', Miss, if its a fair question. I expect from what you first said that you di'dnt mean to ride so far, I've brought you by the place you wanted to stop at.'

`No sir. I am going to to Boston. Is it far, sir?'

`A matter of nine miles. But seems to me you are too young and handsome to be out nights footin' this way 'long turnpikes! you looks too innocent and proper like to 'spect you of any thing as you ought'nt to be;' John did not say the few last words without coloring and manifesting a little degree of embarrassment.

She hung her head in beautiful, yet touching silence and shame: her mind for the first time truly awakened to a proper view of her position.

`I did'nt mean to say any thing disrespectful, Miss;' quickly said John; for he saw tears on her cheek; `if you are going to Boston, you are welcome to ride with me; and I'll befriend you on the way. But have'nt I seen your face before, Miss! It strikes me '

`I will not conceal from you who I am or why I am here,' she said frankly. `I am an orphan and was adopted by Captain Power who kept the General Warren Inn at Hillside. After his death his widow treated me very unkindly,

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and I bore it as long as I could; but last night I learned she was going to cut off my hair and sell it and send me to the work house; and so I got out of the window and escaped from the house, but when I got to the turnpike gate it was shut, and you came along just then, sir, and I climbed up into your wagon, and while you was singing I suppose I must have fallen asleep; for I find it broad day now!

`That's where I've seen you before Cap'n Ben died, for I sometimes use to stop at the door to leave him demijohns. The widdur I've ala'ys heard was a tartar; and now I know it; for any body that could treat you bad deserves to be tied on the top of a liberty pole and fired at forever with a fire-engine. Who do you know in Boston?'

`No one, sir. I hope to find friends.'

`And so you will and foes to, dear Miss what is your name?' he asked feelingly.

`Fanny, sir.'

`Fanny what, if I may ventur?'

`I have no other name, I'm an orphan,' she said with a sadness that went to the honest wagoner's heart.

`I wish,' he exclaimed indignantly, `I had that infernal widow Power tied on the back of my off wheel horse, and a bran-new lash to my whip; if I would'nt salt her! but that's left for fire and brimstone to do, so let her go! I cant let you go to Boston alone! something must be done; I an't much used to havin' such goods as young women in my wagon as freight; though I did let a couzin of mine ride down from Concord to Boston once, to go to a milliner's to learn a trade; and sh'e there now, and I know the milliner. That's the mark!' he cried clapping his hand on his knee, for during this conversation he was seated with his face to her, and his back to his horses, which he had stopped in the road, while she stood timidly up in the wagon. `I'll take and leave you to Miss Sally Newbold's shop, where my couzin Jane is, and I'll make her take you In till somethin' better turns up. That's a fix!'

`You are too, too kind, sir. I am willing to do any thing you advice, for I feel that you are sincere and good.'

`That's what I'd rather hear you say than say it myself. That is settled then. We shall get into Boston about ten o'clock.'

`Is there no danger, sir, that I should be overtaken? I may be pursued and I would die before I would be taken back,' she said with firmness.

I did'nt think of that. I dont travel over fast I allow. But if you are afraid you shall be in Boston in an hour and a half's time. We shall strike the stage route at that sign board ahead and it will not be long before the mail comes along. I will get you a passage in it.'

`I have no money, sir,' she said ingenuously.

`Nor would I touch it if you had,' he stoutly replied. It wont be more than fifty cents, and that an't a goin' to break a man. I'll write on this bit o' paper the number and street where Sally Newbold keeps, and you take it right to her, and tell her John Bolton sent you, and he wont be three hours behind; and keep in the house close till I come and then we'll talk about things and set all strait. Your face is too pretty to be left to itself in such a town as Boston. Now if you'll take a seat by me, Miss, I'll push on and meet the stage.

Fanny climbed over the bales and boxes and assisted by his hand seated herself by him, and he drove on again. After driving a third of a mile he stopped and waited for the regular coach, which he always met at that hour. It was soon heard sharply rattling along before it was seen.

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`There it is! regular as a watch! Hear them wheels and the rattling! I like that sound! to my mind Miss, there's nothin' prettier than the rumbling, clatter-rattle of a stage coach on a hard pike! there she is!

`It drew up at his hail, and Fanny was assisted in by the generous wagoner, who paid her fare and gave her the address of Mrs. Newbold. He then bade her good morning, cautioning her not to get lost, and the coach went dashing on again at the rate of ten miles an hour.

There was but three passengers inside; all old people Fanny, with a grateful heart which found vent in a silent flow of tears, looked out of the window and waved her hand as long as the honest, noble hearted wagoner remained in sight. The novelty of her situation, the rapidity of her motion, the beauty of the country, and, above all, the consciousness of being kindly regarded, with the hope of friends in the city made her perfectly happy. From the summit of a hill, the dome and spires, and piled up houses of Boston suddenly burst upon her eyes, with the ranges of bridges, the water and islands, and, far off, the blue, blue sea! She uttered an exclamation of delight! a new world had opened upon her sensations! more glorious far than any thing she had ever conceived of. Was the earth then so beautiful! was not all beauty confined to the spiritual and fanciful! but she had never before known any thing of the earth she lived upon, but lived not in! Her world had been the Inn at Hillside! and there all was darkness. She gazed now on the scene before her feeling strange, new emotions at her heart and perceiving that there was a glory in the material, as well as in the fanciful. She felt for the first time that earth was desirable to the heart of men for a dwelling place. And so she began to love life; to feel life; to hope in life; and to understand that the life without was given for man to enjoy, and that he who withdrew himself from it to a fanciful life within broke the laws of his being, and inverting himself, defeated the end for which the natural and visible creation was made. Thus she insensibly humanized her spirituality and was each moment more and more fitting herself for the active and the useful.

The coach stopped in Brattle street and Fanny alighted with the rest of the passengers, and almost at the very moment that Gardner Sears had reached the city from Albany! The driver directed her to the street mentioned on her card, and she left the stagehouse to walk thither. The noise of wheels, the tramp of feet, the bustle and business, the hurrying and confusion, with the crowds of people bewildered her at once! she had not proceeded as far up the street as the tower of the old church, before she stopped and gazed round, amazed, upon the lofty buildings of granite, and the high roofs that on all sides seemed to support the skies. She was standing on that side of Brattle street, appropriated particularly to `colored' gentlemen, who there congregating in great numbers to trade in old clothes, have given the place the appellation of the `Ethiopian Row.' It is, properly, `the Black Exchange' of Boston. The persons keeping there are `gentlemen' of responsibility and distinction among the colored gentry; and some of them are rich. They deal in cast off clothing and sometime's advance money on pledges, though they have no pawn-broker's license, These call themselves brokers. No boot black has his shop in this row; for boot blacking is voted a low profession by the dealers in Ethiopian Row. It was along this garment-lined Row, on the south side of Brattle street, that Fanny was waiting 'till she could get a little accustomed to the confusion.

While she was standing there, a negro dressed smartly in a glistening suit of second-hand black, came out of his shop to hang a coat upon his shutters. He was about forty years of age, with a face shining black, but full of good nature and relieved by a white cravat; he had a huge mouth and ears, very long hands and was symmetrically bow-legged, that is his legs both curved outward with the same degree of convexity. His eyes fell upon Fanny and were at once rivetted upon her face; not with the look of admiration with which all strangers viewed her, but with a startled half-recognising inspection of her features. She walked on and came towards him, and his eyes opened wider and wider, and his teeth shone with a grin of silent astonishment. He hung up the coat talking to himself thus:

`If dis nigger nebber hab seen dat face afore den am he `tickarly mistaken sure, I nebber forget dat face. If I dont ax her, may I nebber hear de 'spected Deacon Snowball preach agen! axes pardon, young lady, hopes I dont pertrude, but I'm thinkin' I know'd you when you was a little girl! an't your name Fanny?'

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'Yes, it is,' answered the surprised Fanny, looking at him with alarm, then with interest.

'Gollah! den I does knows you, and you an't changed a bit, since I druve you out. But I seen you twice since then at the tavern; the last time was just before Cap'n Ben died; don't you 'member I spoke to you? I was travelin' along with our 'spected colored preacher to camp meetin', coz I'm one o' the elders o' the nigger church.'

'Yes, I *do* remember you,' she said gladly; 'and I remember you spoke kindly to me, and told me about my father and mother's death, and how they looked, and '

'Don't let your eyes get full ob tears in de street, or you get run ober; jist come in and sit down! Dis am my place ob business, and dat sign ober de door am my name Pompey Slack. Dat am a lady! Let me brush de chair! How handsome you is grown! You look as like your mother, Miss, as if she was in dat chair, and you are most as tall! I nebber forget dat cholery time! But bress de soul, what am brought you to Bosting? Whar you gwaing? I takes a interest in you, coz I al'ays looked on you as a protejum ob mine!'

Here the artless young girl told her friend her story, to which he listened with very expressive wrath.

'I don't swear now, Miss Fanny! I'se guv up hack-drivin' and swearin' at the same time, and opened dis place ob business, and joined de colored church, as all spectablum niggers do: but if I had dat woman here I'm d d if I wouldn't put her into my renowatin' kettle and boil her! But, Miss Fanny, I's got somethin' heavy hangs on my conscium; and I know I nebber sabe my brack soul if I don't let you know all. I'se hab had thoughts ob gwaing to Hillside, coz I had nebber prayed wid a snow-white conscium since I hab been made a elder ob de church, wid dis sin unrepented ob! You is sent here by a Prowidence to sabe my soul from eberlastin' fire; for de scriptum say he dat teal him neibor wife am dam'd. Here am what dis `pentant nigger stole!'

Here Pompey, who had been fumbling at a key-hole of a little trunk he had drawn from his desk, while he was speaking, now drew forth a small parcel, from which he unfolded several wellworn wrappers, and took from the last one a glittering jewel. It was a gold vinaigrette, with a costly jewel set in the cover, with a crest and cypher engraved on it. He approached her with it in his hand.

'Dis am what dis 'penitent Pompey Slack steal from you, Miss Fanny, when you litty girl, like a sinner as dis digger was in dem days ob de flesh, and hack drivin', and swearin'; but I has put away all dem 'niquities ob de world and de debble, and am member ob de church. So, I gibs dis back to you. I keep 'em long and long time, when my conscium prick my liber till it leab no place sound jiss like a honey-comb. De debble hab de `vantage ob me, Miss Fanny, while I kep' dis; and now I gib it back to you, and hopes you will forgib dis `penitent nigger.'

Fanny was silent with surprise. She took the jewel, but seemed to ask by her looks why it was put into her hands. He then explained more clearly; and when she found that it was hers, and had probably been placed on her neck by her mother, she kissed it passionately, and bathed it with tears of love and joy. Pompey was affected, and felt rewarded fully for his honesty. He had, in truth, never intended to steal the jewel when he took it from her neck, but only to retain it as a charm against the cholera. But when that passed he still coveted it, and so kept it in his possession till a change of views respecting his moral accountability caused the matter to trouble his conscience; and doubtless if he had not seen Fanny he would have gone to seek her to return it.

She placed the jewel in her bosom, and expressing her gratitude, and assuring him of her entire forgiveness, she said she would go. He said he would follow her and see that she did not get lost. He did so, and together they arrived at the milliner's, Pompey keeping a respectful distance behind; for the retired hack-driver had not yet got to aspire to walking in the street with a white female. Fanny, blushing and timidly delivering her message, was kindly received and invited into the milliner's little sitting room, while Pompey returned to Ethiopian Row with a lighter conscience in his bosom than he had carried for years. About ten o'clock John Bolton, the stout and honest waggoner, arrived, and after a little conversation with Mrs. Newbold, who was an excellent, plain, good person,

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Fanny was invited to make her house her home till she could find something to do. She grasped Mrs. Newbold's hands and thanked her with a warmth and trustfulness that at once won this lady's heart; and as to John, the wagoner, he had fairly to escape from the shop to prevent her from burdening him with too much thankfulness and blessing; for the generous ever shrink from expressions of gratitude; it is the selfish mind alone that loves and covets these.

When Gardner reached Hillside it was half past ten o'clock; but the village was stirring, and lights were in several houses; for the wedding party at the General Warren had not yet broken up. He stopped with his foaming horse at the inn where he had before remained, and learned from the landlord all the gossip, and particularly, as the latest and newest, the whole story of Fanny's disappearance. He then went out to seek the barber, and found him entering his shop, having just left the wedding, where he had been a guest. He was tipsy.

'Good evening, Mr. Taft,' said Gardner, putting his hand on his shoulder, and looking him closely in the face, for it was star-light only.

'Hic-cu-cuph! Good morn I mean good night. Who who are you?'

'The young doctor.'

'Hic-hic Fan Fanny's off, and no mistake, doctor. I seed the rope!' he said, staggering and holding fast on to Gardner's arm.

'Well, has any thing been heard from her?'

'Not a syl-syl-lil-lilable, docter I seed the rope *and* tracks! The widder's married come, let's go in, and I'll help, help you ki-ki-kiss the bride.'

'You are too drunk to talk to, sir,' said Gardner with sternness. 'I see I can learn nothing from you! There is the money I promised you if you wrote me. Now you had better go to bed and get sober.'

'Never, doctor. I'll never go to to bed drunk! It shall never be said Tony Taft went to to to bed hic-cu-hiccup!'

Here Gardner released himself from Tony's hold, and the barber reeled and caught himself upon the step of his shop door, where he sat. Gardner was going away, satisfied he could hear nothing in Hillside from Fanny, when Tony called him:

'I say, hiccup, doctor; Fanny's off and no mistake! But there's a cir-cumstance, doctor, I'll tell, hiccup, tell you.' (Gardner listened with eagerness.) 'There's a hiccup, (I never had sich a hiccup afore since I was born,) there's a hiccup a young flashy gent in the weddin' as has jist as anxious, hic-hiccup, to find Fanny as you. He's been ridin' about the country, hic and cup went up as far as your father's, so Jock the stable-boy says. So he must ha' had suspicion suspi-picion of you, doctor hic! I've had a sharp eye on him, doctor, sharp, hic eye hiccup, doctor. Wot a distressin' hiccup I has got!'

'What is his name?' demanded Gardner, eagerly.

'They call'd him Mr. Ammon. There he is now, hiccup! a cumin' out o' the house and the widow follerin' him to the door. They's a understandin' between 'em, doc, and I'll bet a shave hic, a shave, hiccup that he knows wot's become o' Fanny if any body does. There they shake hands and he goes into the stable-yard.'

These were their parting words which were not overheard by Tony and Gardner Sears.

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`Then if you will go to night, Mr. Ammon, let me hear of you, as soon as you find where she is. I am sure she's taken the Boston way.'

`And that is my opinion. I saw footsteps this morning on the pike, which could only have been from her small foot; but I lost them near the toll-gate; and the keeper could give me no further information.

`Yet she may have got a ride through, if they was hers, or gone round through the fields.'

`Well, be assured I shall find her if she is to be found. She is too great a treasure for one like me to let escape without an attempt to recover her, good night. Did you say I should find a horse saddled for me in the stable?'

`Yes. White Foot! He is as fleet and sure in the night as in the day. You will send him back by a careful person to-morrow?'

`Yes. Good night and a happy wedded life to you, fair Mrs. Tobitt.'

Gardner Sears crossed rapidly over to the Inn, keeping in the shadow of the trees, for he thought he recognised the form of the person who had left it. He slouched his hat and took off his coat, and threw it across his arm better to disguise himself, if he should be seen: and then went into the yard towards the stable, to get a closer view of him. Before he reached it, and while he was under the shadow of the long shed, the young man galloped out of the stable down past him at a spur pace. The horse started aside at Gardner's white shirt-sleeves, and nearly unhorsed his rider, throwing off his hat.

`Curse, you fellow, have you nothing better to do than stand there to frighten horses! Pick up my hat!' cried Hammond Bramhall, angrily.'

Gardner took up the hat and approached him with it; and as he handed it to him he fixed a keen but covert glance upon his features in the star-light, and recognized them, as well as he had done the voice. Before he could decide whether to speak or not, Bramhall snatched the hat from him, and burying his spurs into his horses sides, bounded forward and galloped out of the yard, and took the right hand turn towards Boston.

He now felt satisfied that Fanny's suspicions were correct; and he believed that Hammond Bramhall was in some way connected with Fanny's disappearance: and in all probability knew where she was, though the widow might not. He well knew the character of Bramhall, having been in collage with him; and once having rescued a young girl from his snares; which interference he had resented by calling Gardner out who met him, disarmed him and gave him his life. From that day the young men had never spoken.

All his being was now roused into indignant resentment, at his discovery. He felt that Fanny was indeed in danger. His thoughts were full of agitation. He first believed that she had fled from his persecution, as well as the widow's and the truth of some un-understanding between him and the latter flashed upon his mind, and roused all his determined and active character. His first impulse was to follow him; for he felt that by this means he should in some way, obtain the clue to discover Fanny. He, therefore, hurried back to his Inn, saddled his horse with his own hands mounted him and dashed on after him at the top of his speed.

CHAPTER X.

`How good and gentle is fair Nature, Thus to hold me to her heart.'

It was twilight on the third day after the disappearance of Fanny; the soft, mellow reflection from the west shed a dreamy light through a gorgeous drawing-room in Beacon street. By the lofty, richly curtained window sat, half

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in shadow, a beautiful woman. She was gazing with a thoughtful countenance upon the scene before her; the umbrageous malls, with their lively crowds; the green, undulating sweep of the broad Common, dotted with happy children; the bright glowing waters beyond, and the fair region of country—houses groves and villages on the opposite shores, with the deep, fathomless sky far, far off, which looked like a boundless ocean of glory, which she seemed to view from the earth, as if looking off and out from a shore. The room in which she sat was large and lofty, and the home of luxury. The more distant parts were lying in gloom, for she had the moment before sent out the lights which a servant had brought in. Twilight was to her, as to all cultivated hearts, a sacred time. It was the Sabbath hour of the world—working Spirit. The lady was beautiful. She was tall, but not too tall; dignified yet not cold. The features were faultless and noble; and mind, and withal, a gentle spirit, too, was stamped upon them. She was a brunette, the fairest olive blending with the rose in her cheek. Her eyes were dark, expressive, and glowing with feeling and warmth of heart. There was a haughty, yet beautiful curve to her lip, but it lessened not the impression of the goodness which her fine face indicated. There was an ease in her manner, and a charming grace in her air, combined with her olive cheek and expressive dark glance, that showed her to be the child of a southern clime. Her name was Gabrielle Lintot, and she was the cousin to Hammond and Brentnal Bramhall. She was an heiress, and, as we have hinted, had been admired by both the cousins; by Hammond with undisguised admiration and bold expressions of his passion; by Brentnal in silent, worshiping idolatry, betraying his passion only by tenderness of voice when he addressed her, and by a silent, diffident devotion to her whenever he was in her presence. But she gave Hammond no encouragement, though she admired his fine face and person; was gratified by his society, and flattered with the attentions of one whom many of her sex admired. She had a good opinion of his mind, but some circumstances had lately led her to suspect his moral character. Yet so much was Hammond with her, and so devoted was he to her, that rumor had it that the proud and beautiful Carolinian was about to give her hand to the elegant Hammond Bramhall.

No one thought of Brentnal, nor was he often in her mind; until the day before his excursion to Hillside, when being in the library after he had left it, curiosity led her to glance at the books that compensated for his withdrawal from society. Under one of them she discovered a poem in pencil. It was not addressed, but she caught sight of her name in one of the lines. She began to read it oh, with what strange feelings! It was addressed to her. It was an eloquent expression of a noble and aspiring, yet crushed and dark spirit! It alluded in language of fine and vast strength and power, to his condition and his *hopes!* She read on: `How deep the bitterness *alone* to grieve, In grief's deep hour the death—watch of the night When Fancy can no more her day dreams weave, And there seems madness in the moon's pale light When sorrow holds me, like a life—long state, Not as a portion, but the *whole* of fate, When the mind yields, like sick men to their dreams, Who know all is not right, yet know not that which seems. `Why come such thoughts across my brow? Oh, why Cannot my soul sit firmly on her throne, And keep beside her strong Philosophy? Alas! I am an outcast and alone. Beneath deep feeling reason's self must sink; I cannot change the thought, yet I *must* think; And, O! how darkly come such thoughts to me The gathered pangs of years, recounting agony! `In sickness and in sorrow, how the breast Will garner its affections in their home! Like stricken bird that cowers within its nest, And feels no more an anxiousness to roam; While a thick darkness, like a cloud, comes o'er The noble spirit; it can rise no more To wing its way, as if it sought the sky, But falls to earth, forlorn, as though it fell to die! `And yet, there is a torturing sense of life, E'en in the feeling of the quick drawn breath, That tells of many years of woe and strife, Eeking our being out, though bringing death: While Fancy, with a thousand thronging tales, Now in her gladness, now in woe, prevails, Till the dark moment of o'erwhelming grief, When sorrow mourns as one who cannot find relief. "Is health returnless? Never more may I Throw by the staff on which, alas! I lean? Is the woof woven of my destiny? Shall I ne'er be again what I have been? And must th' bodily anguish be combined With the intenseness of the anxious mind? The fever of the frame and of the soul, With no medicinal draught to quell it or control! Upon my brow I feel the furrow's course, Deep sinking inward to the source of thought; The deeper sinking if I seek its source, Or try to crush its agony, unsought, Oh! tell thy secret, thou stern vampyre, Care! E'en for Philosophy thou hast a snare, For in thy quest she wears the galling chain, Making the burden more, the more she'd soothe its pain." [*The Emigrant, "a poem, By F. W. Thomas Esq.*

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But, then, sweet solace, beauteous Gabrielle! How oft in hope my heart doth turn to thee, To quell the anguish of my spirit's hell, And in thy Heaven forget my destiny. Oh who can pierce the cloud that o'er him lowers? It were all vain my darkening fate to scan! Enough! 'twill come with the on-hurrying hours, An early grave to hide the *out-cast man!* Oh, couldst thou, maiden, feel a pang for me; 'Twere sweet to die to know thou wept me dead! None loved me living, nor will there dying be A tear of sorrow shed above my resting head.'

Gabrielle's tears fell upon the last lines like the dropping rain of a first falling summer shower: she remained a moment silently and deeply affected.

'Yes, noble, generous and manly Brentnal! there is one who will weep thee dead! who has esteemed thee living; but not truly known thy greatness of heart, till now! And I have been all blind to this deep attachment to his silent worshipping love! Blinded by the open flattery of the light and heartless Hammond, I have let the sunshine of his warm heart fall upon me unregarded! I had suspected something of the depth of feelings that lay at the bottom of my cousin Brentnal's nature! but that these profound fountains have been broken up, and their deep pure rivers of affection been outflowing towards my own heart, which like an arid desert hath let them pour into its bosom without thankfulness, I did not suspect! I knew his intellect was commanding, and with deep interest have I listened to his conversation with others, for he has seldom spoken with me! and yet he has loved me!'

With all her generous nature awakened by what she had discovered, Gabrielle resolved that hereafter she would strive to draw Brentnal out of his dark life of solitude and suspicion, and let him feel that one could sympathize with and appreciate him. 'Henceforth,' she said, 'it shall be a religion with me to make him forget himself and contribute to his happiness. How cruelly indifferent I have been towards him! I cannot forgive myself. I have acted as if true worth must have a fair and prepossessing outside, and so have passed by the true God and his simple altar to worship before the dazzling shrine of an idol. I will be much with Brentnal! I will relieve his solitude! I will read with him, walk with him, talk with him, and he shall be happy! It shall be mine to chase the dark clouds from the deep hallowed heavens of his inner spirit, and to make in his heart all sunny summer. I will study his character deeply, for what he has betrayed of it in these verses has made me love him! I forget the body in admiration of the mind!' In pencil she then wrote beneath the poem

'*Hope!*'

A footstep alarmed her, and she fled by a side door. It was Brentnal. His sensitiveness had been wounded by a rude remark of some brute in the street as he was passing by, and he came in with a gloomy spirit. He sat down by his table. His eyes fell on the poem, and he bitterly pushed it one side.

'Nay what art thou, but like all the unfeeling and scornful world! 'Tis this stately beauty and pride of man that thou dost smile upon! for me thou sparest a glance of pity. Go, and be happy, for thou art good and worthy, and none but the noble and the fair should be near thee! Go and let the great heart of the hunchback break, and his hopes and daring aspirations perish! Ah, what hath blistered this page? 'Tis wet! Nay, 'tis misplaced, and the leaf turned over! Some one hath been here! What is written here? *Hope!* Is this from an angel's pen? 'Tis Gabrielle's hand! Has she been here then, and has she read what I have written? *Hope!* yes, since *thou* hast bid me not despair, I will not! But nay can she have read this and not been angry at my bold, wild presumption? This little word sweetly answers yes! I dare not embrace all that *it* embraces. She bids me hope but not! Nay 'tis mockery! She but laughs at me! and hath written this here in irony! No never that! She is too high-souled and generous! I must then believe that she has read it, and that she is not displeased! But I dare not meet her. Early to-morrow I am going on this fishing excursion; when I return I shall have weighed a thought over it all, and then shall know how to decide. I will not see her before I go. I will go with the sweet hope of hope at my heart. 'Twill be time enough three days hence, when I return to find myself deceived. I have had no truth but bitter truth from the world, and I suspect all that looks like kindness. But I will *hope*, Gabrielle!'

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His fine intellectual countenance was animated with the emotion of a noble pride. He felt a new being awakened in him, and happiness and hope took trembling possession of his bosom.

Gabrielle now sat alone at the window, enjoying the twilight scene and hour, thinking of Brentnal, and wondering at his sudden departure, without seeing her. She yearned to make known to him her deep sympathy and her esteem. Each moment since then he had been in her thoughts, and she had recalled numerous instances of manner and tone which deepened her assurance of his passionate and silently-consuming passion for her. And this consciousness produced in her generous mind a corresponding feeling of interest in him, which was hourly strengthening. This feeling was made more single and greatly strengthened by the conduct of Hammond, who, taking advantage of his brother's absence, had the previous day made a passionate declaration of his attachment, and became so indignant at her refusal to receive his addresses, that he almost insulted her as he haughtily left her presence. This was the day after his midnight return on horseback from Hillside, up to which time he had heard nothing from Fanny, whom he had been diligently in pursuit of.

Gabrielle's twilight meditations were suddenly interrupted by the entrance of some person, and looking up she saw that it was Brentnal. Instantly the reflection of her own boldness in writing what she had, flashed upon her mind, and she felt embarrassed at seeing him. She, however, rose to meet him, though with a deep blush of maidenly shame:

'I am glad to see you, cousin Brentnal. I hope you were successful fishing. Come, sit by the window, for it is pleasant there. Shall I order a light.'

'No, Gabrielle,' he answered in a low, musical, grateful tone; 'this kindness of manner quite unmans me!'

'Twilight is ever a sweet, calm time to me! Do you not love it?' she said as he sat by her near the window.

'Yes it is my best hour. I forget the world then, and all its coldness, and feel that I have something to life for in it, in the happiness it affords my soul.'

'You seem unhappy, Brentnal. A mind like yours should find in itself a world of resources of peace and delight.'

'I am human, and must be happy and miserable as other men. It is denied me to be happy, therefore I am '

'Nay, not insensible!'

'Men avoid me, because I seem not one of them; your sex '

'None but the frivolous of our sex would despise you, Brentnal. The good and the generous know you not! You should come out from your dark misanthropic seclusion of self, and forgetting what accident has afflicted your body with. I know you will not be hurt with me for an unavoidable allusion, for I would be frank and true to you; forgetting yourself make others forget you in admiration of the splendor of your mind.'

'This language from you, cousin! Do you know me then?'

'Yes, and I would you should know me, Brentnal. I am your friend. I have read your heart. I know all you feel, all you fear, all you would hope!'

He pressed her hands together and kissed them, and then bending his forehead down upon them he wet them with tears.

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`Nay, noble cousin; be a man. You are not despised; you are not hated; you are *not* scorned. It is your sensitiveness, in which you envelope yourself as in a net of nerves, that leads you to suppose it. If you mingled freely, and calmly, and fearlessly in the world, men would respect and esteem; women yes I will say it *love* you!'

He looked up and gazed on her animated face through his tears, and again bowed his head and remained silent; but the agitation of his form showed how deeply he was moved. She was distressed.

`Nay, Brentnal, this is childish, unmanly.'

`Forgive me, Gabrielle; but this voice of hope, of kindness, of sympathy, has been so long a stranger to my ear that it awakens all the weakness of my childhood nature. I will hope,' he said with pride of feeling, his dark eyes flashing. `Your words have new-created me. I will obey you. For your sake I will do this.'

`Do it, Brentnal. Let the world know you, admire you, do homage to you, and woman's love, ay, that of the beautiful and the proud, will strew your path and fling sun-light around your heart. All the world worships mind! Thou hast the key to thy own happiness.'

`And thou, sweet, noble Gabrielle, art the priceless casket that contains it. Life without thee '

`I know what thou wouldst say. I know that thou hast a regard for me, to which, if it will make thee happier, Brentnal, I confess myself by no means indifferent. I respect myself more, knowing that I am the object of the regard of such a mind as thine.'

`Noble cousin '

`You are not to say any more. If my frank confession has made you happier, I am repaid.'

`I never knew the bliss of which man's heart was capable till this moment, dearest Gabrielle if thus I may call thee. You have lifted me from despair! You have made me respect myself, and restored to me the true dignity of man. I have no longer the feeling of being beneath my kind. Thou hast made me human; thou hast shown me I may be divine. But dare you sacrifice yourself to '

`Brentnal, we are one in sympathy of soul, and know each the other. You would say that I sacrifice myself! No. I elevate myself by a union of heart with thee, for thou art my greater and nobler. If thou wilt take to thee thy armor of intellect and go out and fling down thy gigantic gauntlet of mind to thy fellows, I should be a lost star, and little seen in the glorious blaze of thy own splendor. Hist, there is thy brother's tread; 'tis heavy and angry.

`So, fair cousin,' said Hammond in a tone of bitter and fierce irony; `so, 'tis for this shapeless lump of deformity that thou hast cast aside my love! I have overheard thy conversation, for I saw this modern Richard when he came in hither, and would needs learn how a hunchback made love! And sooth he hath succeeded admirably well; the darkness of the apartment doubtless favoring him.'

`You are my brother, or by the truth of God '

`Hush, Brentnal! Hammond Bramhall, thou art beneath a generous spirit's notice! Wilt thou insult a woman a guest beneath thy father's roof? Hence! Nay, Brentnal, stay thou! Leave my presence, sir!'

`Gladly! I scorn thee! I hate thee! and as for that foul abortion '

Brentnal sprang forward, and with a terrific blow, felled him to the floor!

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'What have you done?'

'Am I not human, Gabrielle?'

'He has got up. It is well merited.'

'Thou shalt pay for this dearly, brother,' said Hammond, slowly leaving the room.

A hack was in waiting at the door, which they saw Hammond go out and get into, when it drove rapidly off. He had just before received a note from a dissipated moneyless spendthrift whom he had in his pay. It ran thus:

Exchange, 6, P. M. Dear Ham:

After the most persevering efforts I have at last got on the scent of the hare. A person answering her description came in town the morning after the night you said she escaped in a stage, and got out at the tavern in Brattle street. She was seen to go into a negro's in Ethiopian Row, and then to go out with him up the street. I have been in the black's, whose name is Pompey Slack; but he is as mysterious as a fortune-teller, and gravely shakes his woolly head, and wants to know my business 'wid her.' Your money will get it out of him. I send, as you instructed me to do, a carriage for you; call for me, and I will accompany you there. I am sure we are on the track.

Yours,

Hal.

About the same time that this note was being perused, Gardner Sears was writing one to his mother, which we also copy:

Tremont House, 6, P. M. – My Dear Mother:

I reply to your letters in one. I cannot yet visit you. My mind is made up to prosecute this search. Since I wrote you of her escape I have been to Hillside, but could glean no intelligence of her. I, however, saw there a person whom I suspect has had something to do with her flight. If so, I despair! I have been seeking him at his house, and every where, to accuse him, and demand her at his hands, and to punish him if she be lost to me, which God forbid. I hope every thing, yet I fear every thing. He is in town but keeps himself close. I am more and more persuaded that he has something to do with her flight, and that she has been deceived. I rode hard after him the night he left Hillside, but could not overtake him before he reached town. If I had have done so, I should have known all; for I would have drawn the truth from him with his life. He is one of those despicable wretches, who, aided by wealth and leisure, and being destitute of principle, pass all their time in seeking the indulgence of the lowest vices, and directing all their skill and talent to ensnaring the young and beautiful of your sex. I go out again to pursue my inquiries, though with little hope of success. That she is in Boston I know, for such a person was seen at the inn to get out of one of the stages; and while I write she is probably in the snares of this heartless scoundrel. But hope of the best buoys me up. She is too lovely and pure for me to harbor the idea of her ruin. I will write you again; but do not ask me to visit you or study till I have pursued this matter to the end. I am once more going to the tavern in Brattle street, to seek a clue.

Your attached son,

Gardner Sears.

The visit paid by Hammond and his pander to Pompey Slack's shop was by no means successful, and awakened his suspicions, that evil threatened his fair 'protejum.' What Hammond learned from him convinced him that

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Fanny was the person he had had in his shop. No bribe was effectual.

`No, gemmen; I's a sort ob de young lady,s pertectum, and I does'nt betray her to sich wild gemman as mean her no good! She com'd from de country, and Providence placed her in my hands, coz wasn't I de only friend she had when de cholereum kill her parent! No, gold couldn't temp' dis nigger, sir. And I tells you, if you hab any designs 'bout dis young woman, you better leff 'em' lone, jiss whar dey be.'

Hammond cursed him for a black scoundrel, and left the shop. Just at this moment, Fanny, with John Bolton and his cousin were coming down to pay Pompey a visit; for John had heard from her all her history, and felt interested in seeing Pompey. He therefore called in the evening, after he had got his wagon all loaded for an early start in the morning, and asked her to accompany him with his cousin. This was the third day of her residence at Mrs. Newbold's, who had become so much attached to her as to resolve to keep her as an apprentice. Fanny had, therefore, with gratitude at once entered on her duties, and had been so far cheerful and happy. She conversed less with her own soul, and more with the friends around her. She was growing each hour more earth-loving in her nature. She did not so much look into her bosom for love, finding it shed upon her from without, and reflected warmly from the hearts of others; for all loved her.

Hammond was just getting into the hack, with his foot in the upper step, when by a glare of the lamp, he saw Fanny within a rod of him. She had lightly tripped ahead of her two friends to get in to see good Pompey first. With an oath of surprise and delight; Hammond Brentnal sprung back to the walk, and without hesitation, or reflection, but acting from the sudden impulse of the moment, ran and caught her up in his arms; threw his cloak over her face, and leaped into the carriage with her. He spoke a hurried word to the coachman, who sprung on his box; the pander threw up the steps whole, shut the door which Hammond held, and sprung on behind, and the coach flew off at rattling speed.

This bold act was consummated so skilfully, that John Bolton was taken completely by surprise, and remained so overcome with astonishment that he did not stir till the carriage moved, when he seemed to recover his senses. He ran along the side walk shouting, followed by Pompey who had seen the act, but knew not who it was, that he had borne into the coach, and he now hurriedly inquired of him who it was. The hack turned up Exchange street, and rapidly distanced them. Gardner Sears was at the moment crossing into Exchange street, and being attracted by the rapid motion of the coach, he looked up as it drove by, and the light glare of a lamp revealed to him distinctly the face of Hammond Bramhall. A female he saw inside. It was but a thought and action with him! He turned and flew after the carriage and came up with it, as it was turning the corner of Milk street. He here saw Fanny's face, her head out of the window and Hammond trying to keep her upon the seat. At a bound he sprung up behind the carriage, and taking the pander, whom he had once well known, by the collar, he hurled him to the ground, and then climbing over the top of the coach he grappled with the driver upon his box, and wrested the reins from his grasp. He then by force, stopped the carriage, by turning the horses into the narrow passage of Hawley street. He then leaped to the ground, and pulled open the door of the hack.

`Villain,' he cried seizing the astonished Hammond by the arm, and dragging him out to the earth.

`Infernal scoundrel!' retorted Hammond, rising from the ground, and dealing him a heavy blow, which John Bolton, who at that moment came up, caught on his arm, and repaid with interest. Gardner left him to take care of Hammond, and bounded into the carriage by the side of Fanny, who pale and in tears, and trembling like a leaf, threw her arms about him, crying, `my friend, my true and generous friend! I was wishing you were near to save me; and my wish is answered!'

`Then I am not forgotten.'

`D n him, let dis nigger hab a lick at dis miserable scoundrel,' cried Pompey, seeing that it was Fanny in the carriage; and he knocked the pander over, who had come up to assist his employer.'

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‘Oh there is my good John Bolton, and there too is my kind friend the blackman!’ said Fanny smiling happily; ‘I am among friends indeed.’

‘Dat you am, Miss Fanny! Dese fellar hab got sorry dey eber tink runaway wid you, and Pompey Slack by.’

‘And so you be Mister Slack?’ asked John.

‘Dem is my name, sar, who am you, sar? you is a friend ob Fanny, and dar’s my hand if it am a brack one.’

‘He is the honest wagoner, Pompey.’

‘Den he am a gen’leman, and dares dis nigger’s han!’ John took it and shook it heartily; and by this time the two young roues, had managed to crawl into the stable, and get assistance for they were terribly beaten and bruised.

Another carriage was obtained, the driver of this, having jumped from his box and fled, and Fanny was, at her own request, taken back to Mrs. Newbold’s; Here they all went in, Pompey as well as the rest, and soon Gardner was made acquainted, from Fanny’s own lips, while all listened, with all that had occurred. Fanny told her story naturally and with feeling. He heard her to the end; and then pressing, almost adoringly, her hands to his lips, he shook Pompey and John warmly by the hand, and expressed his lively gratitude to Mrs. Newbold. Fanny seemed to him like a sister restored for he seemed to feel that he had known and loved her all his life. She could not but be grateful to him, not only for his bold and successful rescue of her, but for his deep and passionate interest in her. Hers was a heart, sensitively alive to kindness, and a word of affection won her heart. Towards Gardner, she, however, entertained a feeling deeper than mere gratitude. He had been her first friend; from his lips she had heard the first word of kindness and sympathy. She had thought of him in her need, and wished for him in her peril; and deep was the place, therefore, she had given him in her heart. The few day’s past adventures her passage through such varied scenes had given her independence in thought and action, and awakened her more fully to the realities of the life that was around her. She had had little time for retiring within herself, for things external made the strongest claims upon her attention. She was getting to be practical.

Gardner discovered this change in her; and was pleased. He was fearful it might proceed too far, and her sweet and charming originality would be lost in a life parallel with that of others. He wished her to be practical, and to derive her chief happiness from without, as became her earth-born nature, but he did not wish her to lose by familiarity with the artificialities of life, her freshness and delicacy. That evening Gardner spent at Mrs. Newbold’s; and it was a happy one, both to him and Fanny. When John took his leave, Gardner made him a handsome present, which being delicately conferred, was, though with reluctance, received by the generous wagoner with gratitude. Pompey in his turn, was less sensitive, and expressed his acknowledgments for Gardner’s liberality, with becoming grace.

What added to Gardner’s gratification, if any thing could make him happier, was Fanny’s possession of the viniagrette, He had closely examined it, and taken an impression of the crest and cypher in sealing-wax before leaving Mrs. Newbold’s.

‘Now,’ said he as he entered his hotel. ‘I will see Fanny safe at my mother’s to-morrow, and then I will go to England in the next steamer, and at the Herald’s Office, find what family claims this crest. This proves that her family is in high society.’

It was for her own sake; not for himself he wished to prove her birth. There was no selfishness, mixed with his love, for her.

The next morning as he came from breakfast, he entered the readingroom, and took up the Morning Post. His eye fell almost at the first, on the following advertisement:

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`Henry Leon, otherwise Have, who came to Boston, in the United States, from London, in July 1832, with his wife and female child; or his representatives, if he is dead, or any person who can give any information concerning him are requested to apply to Morton & Co. Adelphi Terrace London, or to the Tremont House, No , without delay, as he, or they will hear something to their advantage.'

`Now have I unravelled this chain to its end. This relates to Fanny, and now will the mystery hanging over her birth, be cleared up. With trepidation, moved by mingled, hope, and fear, he copied the advertisement and sent up his card with it, early as the hour was, to the room in the hotel, named in the advertisement. He was ordered to be shown up, and was ushered into a handsome chamber, where he was received by a pleasant looking, bustling gentleman, with a high bald shining forehead, a rosy face and altogether a good looking Englishman.

Gardner briefly stated the object of his visit, and detailed Fanny's history to him, to which he listened with deep and earnest attention.

`Well, sir, this looks very clear! but every evidence is necessary to substantiate her claims. I am the agent for the Earl of H . He had an only son, Henry, who married in 1825, the daughter of a poor curate. She was, indeed, surpassingly beautiful, but beauty is not aristocracy, nor blood. His father, the Earl, incensed, refused to see him, and closed his doors against him. He retired to the continent, and passed nearly six years in Germany. At length he returned, and addressed a note to the Earl, who promised to receive him only on the condition of divorcing from his wife, and marrying the daughter of Lord E . This he firmly refused to do; and as the marriage with Lord E 's daughter, was a favorite scheme of the Earl, he at length resolved, to have the wife and child spirited away! The plan was successful, during the young Lord Henry's absence; but he discovered their retreat, rescued them, and privately got on ship-board, and sailed, as has since been ascertained, in the American ship Ashton, Captain, Wallis, for Boston. Since then, nothing has been heard from them, The Earl is now dead; and I am the confidential agent of the Lord Chancellor, to visit this country, and ascertain, if he or the child be alive, and inform the heir of the vacancy.'

`Fanny is the person you seek. What was the crest and cypher of Lord Henry Leon?'

A lion's head and fore-paws, grasping a cross. The cypher is H. H., his family name being Haye.

`Look at this impression sir, upon this wax?'

`It is the same. How came you by it?' he demanded with more animation, than he had before evinced.

`I took it only last night, from a vinaigrette, she had about her neck, when adopted by the tavern-keeper.'

`This is extraordinary, and valuable evidence. Nay, I may say it is conclusive. I would like to see the maiden.'

`Come with me.'

The gentleman accompanied him to Mrs. Newbold's, and they entered the shop.' There were several young girls present.

`She is here! Perhaps if you discover her by any likeness, the proofs will be conclusive!'

`And there she stands, the same beautiful and matchless creature her mother was! I am satisfied, sir.'

The gentleman then approached her, and bowed with singular respect; and then took her hand. A private room was given to them, by Mrs. Newbold, and before the agent of the Chancery Court had been with her a quarter of an hour, he stated to Gardner that he was satisfied. The locket was shown him, and he recognized it as having

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belonged to Lord Henry's mother, Fanny's grandmother.

But we must draw our story to a close. Fanny, Gardner Sears, his mother, and the agent, sailed for Europe, in the next steamer, and there her claims were recognised and confirmed by the Lord Chancellor, who appointed her a guardian, during her minority. Gardner Sears, and Mrs. Sears, then at her urgent request, took up their abode at Hays Castle, and there now dwell, with her. Gardner is her self-imposed tutor, and all the devotion and love of Fanny's nature, have only this noble young man, as their present and ultimate object. She is not changed in the artlessness and truthfulness of her pure and simple character, by the dazzling rank and fortune, to which she has been elevated. She is no longer a stranger upon earth. She loves the beautiful of the real, as deeply as she loved the ideal! she lives less in her own fanciful life having entered upon a life whose happiness, though checkered by clouds, is more substantial and true, and consistent with her nature. Gardner Sears, and her happiness in his presence are the true manifestation of her idea of life. She had grown intellectually, as well as spiritually wise. He too had found in her, the idea reflected from her, yet unseen, which accompanied him from boyhood upwards. That dim presentiment of her, the more he saw of her, was the more truly fulfilled. Daily their characters are blending and passing over, the one into the other; he from her deriving faith, spirituality and purity, and that deep wisdom that ever wells up from the soul of the child of nature; and she from him gathering strength of outward life, knowledge of uses, intelligence of intellect and practical truth. With these advantages, Fanny, the fair and youthful Countess of Hays, promises to be as lovely in mind, as in person, and to be as bright an ornament to the society in which she lives, as her young and pure spirit, had doubtless been to the scenes of the fanciful life, from which friendship, love and truth, had drawn her forth. Once all was inward, and she felt not the outward world; but now that she has learned to translate the outward world into the inward, she is become, and daily grows wiser, better, and happier.

The beautiful Gabrielle Lintot, the Southern belle, and wit, was soon publicly rumoured, to be engaged to Brentnal Bramhall. All wondered and exclaimed, 'what a sacrifice! what can she see in him to admire!' But soon he came from the solitude of himself, into the world, and the splendor of his intellect burst out before all eyes, and wonder and contempt, were changed into admiration and homage, and in the mind, all men forgot the man. Gabrielle Lintot was envied; and proud and happy was she, when she saw Brentnal surrounded by intelligent women, and learned men, listening to his words of genius, with breathless attention! So she had the just reward, her noble and generous emotion, on discovering his darkened mind, clouded and shut out from life, so truly merited. But her true reward was in the consciousness of being worthy the love of such a man as Brentnal Bramhall.

They are now married, and touring in England, where for a few days they were guests of the young Countess Fanny, Gardner being Brentnaal's classmate; and familiar with the events of our heroine's life. Every where he moves the prejudice of the eye is disarmed when he speaks; and that homage is paid to his commanding genius, by men of letters, which fills Gabrielle's heart with pride and joy.

Shall we dispose of our other characters, or let them pass into oblivion? Perhaps, however, the reader will be interested to know that Pompey Slack is still in good health; and promises to be the richest colored merchant in Ethiopian Row; Fanny having sent him a present of a hundred pounds. He loves to talk of Fanny, and is always ready to tell how she had been his 'protegeum;' but he always forgets the part touching the abstraction of the vinaigrette.

Tonny Taft, we are sorry to say, has become a tipler, thus eloquently holding up a warning to all weak-brained barbers, to beware of ginger-pop; for this led to Tonny's ruin.

Snip has signed the temperance pledge; so the scale is fairly balanced in the village of Hillside. It gives us pleasure to state, that Mrs. Tobitt has not had an hour's peace since she married; the master, 'being in truth master, and carrying out upon his wife, his long confirmed habits of school discipline! She nearly ruptured a blood-vessel with rage and vexation, when she heard that Fanny had become a Countess; and what between the master's

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tyranny, and her own ill-humor, she is fast going into a decline. John Bolton is no longer wagoning between Vermont and Boston, but with a thousand dollars sent him by the generous Fanny, he has opened a grocery, at No Hanover Street, where he promises to become a rich man. Captain Wallis has applied for a ship, expressly to visit England, to see `Fanny.' Last and least, Hammond Bramhall, having run through he means, and forged a bill on his father's banker, fled to the West; and is said to be now attached to one of the band of `Free-Hunters,' that roam the prairies, intercepting the wealthy Mexican caravans. Thus end we our tale, and thank you kindly, for your patience.

THE END.