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## THE STREAM OF LIFE.

Fresh flowers are growing  
By life's first flowing,  
Whose waves are growing  
In the light of truth;  
And joy is stealing  
O'er every feeling,  
While hope keeps pealing  
From the tower of youth.

From nature's treasure  
We snatch the measure  
Of sparkling pleasure,  
Which we madly drain;  
And deem that never  
Fond ties can sever,  
But shield us ever  
From grief and pain.

As ages advance  
The sunlight dances  
With flicker glances  
On the stream of life;  
And mist of warning  
That seemed adorning  
The brow of morning  
Grew clouds of strife.

Last joy appearing  
Our sad souls cheering  
With dreams endearing  
Of the days of yore.  
Our spirit pillows  
On memory's billows  
'Neath pensive willows  
Forevermore!

## THE POOR GENTLEMAN

### CHAPTER XI.

A profound silence followed this complaining outburst, and the peasant woman, with her head bent to the ground, sympathized with him truly, till after a few moments, she attempted to console the sufferer in her simple way.

'Oh, sir, I understand only too well how much you endure. And yet why despair. Who knows but we may receive some news of our dear young lady when we least expect it. God is good: he will hear our prayers; and our joy for her return will make us forget all our grief.'

'Oh that your prophecy might be realized, my good woman. But seven months have already gone since they departed. During three of them a hundred persons have been employed in seeking the wanderers. They have been sought for in every direction, and not the slightest intelligence has been obtained. Not a trace, not the least sign that they are even alive. My reason tells me not to despair; but my heart magnifies my ills and cries aloud that I have lost her!—lost her forever!'

He was about quitting the garden, when a noise attracted his attention as he pointed toward the road leading to the chateau.

'Listen! Don't you hear something?' cried he.

'It is the gallop of a horse,' answered Bess without comprehending why the noise so much startled her master.

'Poor fool!' said the young man to himself; why am I so startled by the passing of a horseman?

'But see? see? he is coming into the avenue!' cried Bess, with increasing interest. 'Oh, God, I am sure it is a messenger with news. Heaven grant it may be good!'

As she said this the rider passed through the gate at full gallop, and, drawing rein at the door they had just reached, took a letter from his pocket and handed it to the master of Grinselhof.

'I come,' said he, 'from your notary, who ordered me to deliver you this letter without a moment's delay.'

Gustave broke the seal with a trembling hand, while Bess, smiling with hope followed all her master's movements with staring eyes.

As he read the first lines the anxious youth grew pale; but as he went on a tremor ran through all his limbs, till with a hysterical laugh and clasped hands he exclaimed,—

'Thanks! thanks. Oh God, she is restored to me.'

'Oh, sir, sir,' cried Bess, 'is it good news.'

'Yes; yes, rejoice with me. Lenora lives. I know where she is,' answered Gustave, half mad with delight, running into the house and calling all the servants. 'Quick, quick, have out the travelling carriage and the English horses. My trunk. My cloak. Quick, fly.'

He carried forth with his own hands a number of things that were necessary for the journey. His fleetest horses were attached to the vehicle, and, all though they strained their bits an-

pawed the ground, as if impatient for the road, the postillion lashed them fiercely as they dashed through the gate way.

In a moment, and almost as if by magic, the coach was on the road to Antwerp and hidden from the staring crowd by a cloud of dust.

Suppose that we take a trip in fancy to Nancy, in France, in search of poor De Vlierbeck and his daughter. Let us wind through an immense number of narrow streets in the quarter known as the Old Town and at last halt at the door of an humble cobbler. This is the place. Pass through the shop; mount the staircase; another story yet; open the door and here we are.

Everything indicates poverty; but order and neatness preside over the room. The curtains of the little bed are white as snow, the stove polished with black, lead till it shines, and the floor is sanded in Flemish style. Mignonette and violets bloom in a box on the window-sill; and a bird chirps in a cage above them. A young woman sits in front of the window; but she is so intent on the linen she is sewing that no other sound is heard in the silent room but that made by the motion of her hands as they guide the needle. She is dressed in the plainest garments; yet they are cut and put on so gracefully that one may declare at a glance she is a lady.

Poor Lenora. And this was what fate had in store for thee. To hide thy noble birth under the humble roof of a mechanic; to seek a refuge from insult and contempt far from thy childhood's home; to work without relaxation; to fight against privation and want; and to sink at last into shame and poverty heart-broken by despair. Misery, doubtless, has cast a yellow tinge upon her cheeks and stolen its radiance from thy glance. But no, thank God, it is not so. Thy heroic blood has strengthened thee against fate; and thy beauty is even more ravishing than of old. If a cloistered life has chastened thy roses, their tender bloom has only become more touching. Thy brow has grown loftier and purer, thine eyes still glisten beneath their sweeping lashes, and that well-remembered smile still hovers around thy coral lips.

Suddenly Lenora stopped working. Her hands rested on the work in her lap, her head bent forward, her eyes were riveted dreamily on the ground, and her soul, wandering perhaps to other lands, seemed to abandon itself on the current of a happy reverie. After a while she placed the linen she had been sewing on a chair and got up slowly, leaning languidly on the window frame she gathered a few violets, playing with them a while, and then looked abroad at the sky over the roof tops, as if longing to breathe once more the fresh air and enjoy the spring. Soon her eyes fixed themselves compassionately on the bird that hopped about its cage and ever and anon struck its bill against the wires as if striving to get out.

'Why dost thou want to leave us, dear little bird?' said she, softly. 'Why dost thou wish to be gone, dear comforter of our sadness? sing gayly to day; father is well again, and life is once more a pleasure. What is it makes thee flutter about so wildly and pant in thy cage? Ah! is it not hard, dear little one, to be captive when we know there are joy and freedom in the open air?—when we are born in the fields and woods?—when we know that there alone are independence and liberty. Like thee, poor bird, I am a child of nature; I too have been torn from my birthplace; I too bemoan the solitude where my childhood was passed! But has a friend or lover been snatched from thee—as from me—forever. Dost thou grieve for something more than space and freedom. Yet why do I ask. Thy love season has come around again, has it not, and love is the greatest blessing of thy little life! I understand thee, poor bird! I will no longer be thy fate! Fly away, and God help you! Begone, and enjoy the two greatest blessings of life! Ah, how thou singest as thy wings bears thee away,—away to the sky and woods! Farewell! farewell!' As she uttered these last words Lenora

opened the cage door and released the bird, which darted away like an arrow. After this she resumed her work and sewed on with the same zeal as before, till aroused by the sound of footstep on the staircase.

'It is father? God grant he may be lucky to day!'

Monsieur De Vlierbeck entered the room with a roll of paper in his hand, and, throwing himself languidly into a chair seemed altogether worn out with fatigue. He had become very thin; his eyes were sunk in their sockets, his cheeks were pale, and his whole expression was changed and broken. It was very evident that sickness or depression, or perhaps both, had made fearful ravages on his body as well as spirits.

The poor old gentleman was wretchedly clad. It was evident that he had striven as formerly to conceal his indigence, for there was not a stain or grain of dust on his garments; but the stuff was threadbare and patched, and all his garments were too large for his shrunken limbs.

Lenora looked at him a moment anxiously. 'You do not feel ill, father, do you?'

'No, Lenora' replied he; 'but I am very wretched.'

Lenora said nothing, but embraced him tenderly and then knelt down with his hand in hers.

'Father,' said she, 'it is hardly a week since you were ill in bed: we prayed to God for your restoration, and he listened to our prayers; you are cured, dear father, and yet you give way anew at the first disappointment. You have not been successful to day father. I see it in your face. Well, what of it. Why should it interfere with your happiness. We have long learned how to fight against fate. Let us be strong and look misery in the face with heads up: courage is wealth; and so, father dear, forget your disappointment. Look at me. Am I sad, do I allow myself to be downcast and despairing? I suffered and wept enough when you were ill; but, now that you are well again come that may, your Lenora will always thank God for his goodness.'

The poor old man smiled feebly at the courageous excitement of his daughter. 'Poor child,' said he; 'I understand very well how to strive to appear strong in order to keep me up. May heaven repay your love, dear angel whom God has given me, your word and smile control me so completely that I may say a part of your soul passes with them into mine. I came home just now quite heart broken and half crazy with despair; but you, my child, have restored me to myself again.'

'That's right, father,' said she, raising from her knees and sitting down on a chair close beside him, 'come, father, tell me now all your adventures to day, and afterwards I will tell you something that will make you laugh.'

'Alas, my child, I went to Monsieur Roncevaux's academy to resume my English lessons; but during my sickness an Englishman was put in my place: we have lost our best bit of bread.'

'Well, how is it about Mademoiselle Pauline's German lesson?'

Mademoiselle Pauline has gone to Strasburg and will not come back again. You see, Lenora, that we are losing every thing at once, so have I not cause to be anxious and downcast. This news seems to overcome you, my child, strong as you are.

In truth, Lenora was somewhat appalled by the dejecting words; but her father's remark restored her self possession, and she replied, with a forced smile.

I was thinking, father, of the pain these dismissals gave you, and they really annoyed me. Yet there are something that ought to make me happy to day, Yes, father, I have some good news for you.'

'Indeed you astonish me. Lenora pointed to the chair.'

'Do you see that linen,' said she, 'I have a dozen fine shirts to make out of it; and when they are done there are so many more waiting for me. They pay me good wages, and I think, from what they say, that in time there will be something better in store for me. But as yet that is only a hope,—only a hope.'

De Vlierbeck seemed particularly struck by the last remark of his daughter,

as he looked at her anxiously. Well, well, what is it that makes you so happy and hopeful,' said he.

Lenora took up her sewing and went busily to work.

'You wouldn't guess it in a week, father. Do you know who gave me this work. It is the rich lady who lives in the house with a courtyard, at the corner of our street. She sent for me this morning, and I went to her while you were abroad. You are surprised, father; are you not?'

'I am, indeed, Lenora; you are speaking of Madame De Royan, for whom you were employed to embroider those hand some collars. How does she come to know you?'

'I really don't know. Perhaps the person who gave me her collar to embroider told her who worked them: she must have spoken to her about your illness and our poverty, for Madame De Royan knows more of us than you imagine.'

'Heavens. She does not know—'

'No, she knows nothing about our name or from whence we came.'

'Go on, Lenora, you excite my curiosity. I see you want to tease me to day.'

'Well; father, if you are tired I will cut my story short. Madame De Royan received me with great kindness, complimented me on my embroidery, asked me some questions about our misfortunes, and consoled and encouraged me generously. 'Go, my child,' said she: 'as she gave me the linen; work with a good will and be prudent I will protect you. I have a great deal of sewing to do,—enough for two months at least. But that would not be enough I mean to recommend you to all my friends, and I mean to see that you are paid for your work in such a way that your father and yourself shall be above want. I took her hand, and kissed it, for I was touched by the delicacy with which she gave me work and not alms. Madame De Royan understood me, and, laying her hand kindly on my shoulder, 'keep up your spirit Lenora, said she; 'the time will come when you must take apprentices to help you, and so by degrees you will become mistress of a shop.' Yes, father that is what she said, I know her words by heart.'

With this she sprang to her father embraced him, and added, with considerable emotion.—

'What say you to it, father. Is it not good news. Who knows what may come to pass? Apprentices.—a shop, a store.—a servant, you will keep the books and buy our goods. I will sit in the room and superintend the work-women. How sweet it is to be happy and to know that we owe all to the work of our hands. Then, father your promise will indeed be fulfilled, and then you may pass your old days happily.' There was a look of such extreme serenity in Monsieur De Vlierbeck's face an expression of such vivid happiness was reflected from his wrinkled cheeks that it was evident he had allowed his daughter story to bewitch him into forgetfulness. But he soon found it out and shook his head mournfully at the enchantress.

'Oh, Lenora, Lenora, you witch! how easily you have managed to seduce me. I followed your words like a child and I really believed in the happiness you promised; But let us be serious; The shoemaker spoke to me again about the rent; and asked me to pay it. We still owe him twenty francs, do we not?'

'Yes, twenty francs for rent, and about twelve francs for the grocer; that's all. When the shirts are done we will give my wages on account to the shoemaker, and I know he will be satisfied. The grocer is willing to give us longer credit. I received two francs and a half for my last work. You see very well father, that we are still quite rich, and before a month is over will be out of debt entirely.'

Poor De Vlierbeck seemed quite consoled; and a gleam of fortitude shone in his black eyes as he approached the table, unrolling the paper he had brought with him on his return.