

THE BEACON

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THE BEACON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE LEGEND OF PHILLIS."

A face at a window, white
As the face of ghost, in vain
Out-stares the watches of night
Through the blur of gusty rain.
"Never, oh, never, never!"
The wind and the rain croon o'er,
"The sea rolls on for ever,
But the ship returns no more."

The watcher slept, and sleeping
She saw where the night was black,
Through fog the ship was creeping,
And doubtful and strange her track.
Her sides the storm had riven,
To streamers her sails were rent,
And from the westward driven,
All stricken and maimed she went.

Out of the black, on her lee,
There flashed a glimmer of flame—
A gleam upon mist and sea,
That flickering went and came;
And they of the ship were glad,
And merrily tacked, and bore
With the will and strength they had
For the beacon on the shore.

A perilous shore, that rose
Sheer flint from the seething wave,
Where the sunken rocks enclose
The bounds of a hidden grave;
And under it one crept low,
Uplifting and waving there
A torch, with its eyes aglow,
And flame as of streaming hair.

O trencherous light, that gloyed
Where the demon wreckers wait!
O fated vessel, that rode
So cheerily to its fate!
There came a shock and a rush
Of waters—a cry! and then
A crash—and a sudden hush,
And horror of drowning men!

The face at the window, white
As the face of a ghost, again
Out-stares the watches of night
Through the blur of gusty rain.
"Never, oh, never, never!"
The wind and the rain croon o'er,
"The sea rolls on for ever,
But the ship returns no more!"

For the Favorite.

HARD TO BEAT.

A DRAMATIC TALE, IN FIVE ACTS, AND A PROLOGUE.

BY J. A. PHILLIPS,
OF MONTREAL.

Author of "From Bad to Worse," "Out of the Snow," "A Perfect Fraud," &c.

ACT IV.

SCENE V.—Continued.

Mr. Farron led the way direct to the dissecting-room, and left his companions there. "Wait a minute, Charlie," he said, "and I'll go down stairs and see about it."
Morton leaned against one of the heavy oak tables and looked about him in a listless sort of way. The scene was not new to him, and had it been, he would scarcely have paid any attention to it. Some fifteen or twenty students were working away at various parts of the human body which had been taken from the different subjects under dissection; most of them were smoking, and occasionally a light jest or a snatch of a song might be heard. On a table at the furthest end of the room was at work a body of which a solitary student was at work; it had not been dismembered yet, and he was opening the body to remove the intestines, &c.; from time to time he took out portions and laid them beside him.
It seemed an eternity to Mr. Morton before



"A TORCH, WITH ITS EYES AGLOW."

Farron returned; yet it was only a few minutes before he re-entered the room and said:

"It is up here, Charlie; now don't get excited, it may be all a false alarm, but if it isn't we will know in a minute. Here, boys," he continued, turning to his brother students, "which is the last body sent up; that of a woman?"

"It's over there in the corner," replied one of the students, who was scrapping away very industriously at a leg bone; "Billy is at work on it; he's practising post-mortem examination."

"It's mighty queer," said the party mentioned as Billy, "I can't see through it at all."

"What is the matter, Billy?" inquired Mr. Farron, approaching the table.

"The heart won't come out. I've got it now," and giving a good pull, he brought out the organ. The moment his eye fell on it he changed color, and, hastily passing it to his left hand, he took hold of something which appeared to be sticking in it, and drew it out.

It was a long slender rod of glittering steel, with a finely sharpened point, which he held up to the light, as he cried in a voice of terror.

"Great God, boys, this woman has been murdered!"

"Murdered!"
Every student started from his work, the jeat remained unfinished, the song died on the lips where it was to have been born, every voice was hushed as they gazed with startled eyes on the fatal evidence held up before them; the trickling of a few drops of blood to the zinc floor and the rumbling of a passing cart fell with terrible distinctness on the excited nerves

of the horror-stricken group. The presence of death they did not mind, but to stand face to face with a foul crime, discovered by one of themselves, was a new experience to these embryo doctors.

"Stand aside; let me see it." Was it the voice of a man or of some tortured spirit that spoke? Was it the face of a man, or of a ghost, which met their gaze as they turned toward whence the sound proceeded?

Charlie Morton had started from the table against which he had been leaning at the sound of that word "murdered," and was advancing toward the table on which the body lay. His face was as livid as those of the corpses around him, and his eyes blazed with almost a maniac glare; he clutched at his collar as if it choked him, and, although he looked straight before him, he walked like one in a dream. He saw but one thing in that whole room, the still white form lying mangled on the table at the far end of the room; he heard but one word that one word "murdered."

The students stood respectfully aside to let him advance; they had been startled, shocked, astonished at the discovery Billy had made, but they felt now that that was only the first act of a terrible drama which was about to be enacted and that one of the principal actors now stood before them.

Morton advanced slowly to the table and looked down at the form lying on it.

One glance was sufficient; all his worst fears were realized, all doubt was at an end; all hope was fled.

The body was that of his sister.

The form was torn and mangled by the dissecting-knife; the face was pallid with the impress of death; the light blue eyes were closed forever; the ruby lips were blue from the touch of the destroyer; years, sorrows, pain, suffering had left their traces in the hollow cheeks, sunken eyes and dented lines, but the heart that loved that form so well in years gone by knew it in an instant, knew it, eye would have known it even if he had not had hopes, half feared to find it there. The face was calm, there was almost a smile on it, no sign of pain at dissolution, the murderer had, at least, been merciful enough to make her death swift and sudden.

He stood for some seconds gazing silently at the inanimate form, then stooped over it and pressed his lips to the cold rigid ones of the corpse.

"My darling," he said, kneeling on the bloody zinc floor, and, throwing his arms around the corpse, he drew the head up to his shoulder and fondly kissed the lips and forehead; "my darling, that I have mourned for six years as dead, to find you thus cruelly murdered, to know that I have been betrayed, deceived, and that your life has been made the penalty of gratifying that man's passion; it is hard, very hard, to bear; but you shall not go unavenged to your grave; here, by your dead body, I swear to hunt Harry Griffith to death, to have his life for yours; if there is any law in Canada he shall die the death of a dog, and, if the law will not do me justice, then I will take the law into my own hands, and kill him as I would any wild beast."

He dropped his head on the cold dead face and remained silent for some time.

Mr. Fowler had meanwhile got a sheet from the janitor's wife and thrown it over the remains; most of the students had quietly left the room at a signal from Farron, and he was explaining the state of affairs to them outside. Only Fowler, Johnson and a couple of students who had more curiosity than politeness now remained.

Morton continued so long kneeling by his dead sister that Fowler feared he had fainted from excessive emotion, and at last approached him and placing his hand on his shoulder said,

"Charlie, old fellow, this sort of thing won't do; don't break down now when you require all your energy and coolness to bring this rascal to justice. You don't need me to tell you, old fellow, how deeply I feel for you, you know it; and you know that I will help you, if my help can do any good, in hanging the doctor."

He put his arm round Morton's shoulder and tried to raise him from the ground; at first he did not succeed, but after a short while Morton rose to his feet and held his hand out to Fowler.

The two men clasped hands, with a warm close grip, and looked into each other's faces. No words were spoken, but actions and looks are frequently more expressive than words.

Fowler was young, volatile, rather too fond of a spree and not of any great depth of character; but he was greatly attached to Charlie Morton and his heart was weeping for his friend, although there were no tears in his eyes.

"Come," he said, "come, old fellow, we must go about this matter at once. Don't break down now, we have a tough fight before us. You may depend on it that rascal Griffith has left very few tracks behind him, he is too clever for that. We may have trouble to prove that he committed the murder, although there is no doubt in our minds that he did. You know his favorite saying he is 'hard to beat'?"

"Yes, yes, I know," responded Mr. Morton rousing himself with an effort, "he says he is hard to beat, but murder and falsehood and cowardice and baseness, are never hard to beat where truth and honesty and manliness are arrayed against them. Hard to beat," he continued savagely, "yes; we'll see who is hard to beat. He has robbed my life of all its sweetness, he has found it easy to triumph over me with his plots and schemes; perhaps, he'll find at the last I am harder to beat than he thinks."

By this time Mr. Farron had partially explained the case to the astonished students, and he now re-entered the room accompanied by some of them.

Mr. Farron was a very clear-headed, practical sort of young man, and, although greatly excited, he managed to keep pretty cool.

"Look here, Charlie," he said, "you must get out of this as soon as possible; we are only

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