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POOR DOCUMENT

fears of shame started into his eyes. "I aint so low; I never thought but what you would before."

She gave him a look half curious and half pitiful. He might as well have cried for the moon. Could it be the lad thought that just because she was pretty she could make his home happy for him—his?

"I'm not going to have a hand at making another poor man's home. People like us had better be single; there's only half the trouble that way, Tommie."

The broad shouldered young man, who did not know what was good for him, fell back from the woman his heart hungered for as if he was shot. And she walked on, with hardly another thought for the foolish lover who imagined they two could be happy together.

Why couldn't she be rich? They had always told her she was beautiful. If she only had a chance. They say men are fools over pretty women, and that is the only hope a woman has of winning her way. If she only had a chance.

A delicate gray mist floated over the river below the village, and the green forests and fresh meadows on the other side smiled through it, like a fair woman through her tears. A tired soul might have drunk in its beauty and been rested, but Jane Graves cast her eyes down on the dusty road before her and walked along with a set bitter curl on her bright red lips, and did not once look at the gift of God's mercy to the poorest of his creatures. For her part she despised the poor; she didn't pity them; great strong men who submitted to be trodden on and ground under the feet of the rich; whose blood and muscles and quivering flesh were weighed in the balance against a few dollars of the speculators. It was good enough for them as long as they submitted to it. She didn't blame the rich; they were the only wise people; she only envied them. They did well to take all they could get and walk over as many thousands as would fall down before them. Oh, if she could only win her way to their ranks. But the rich men do not come into the weave room for their enslavers.

Suddenly she heard a step behind her; a step she knew from all others in the world, and the whole air seemed to tremble with a new, strange, heavenly impulse.

"Good evening, Jane."

She turned with a new, sweet shyness. It was Curran, the agitator, who was beside her. A soft flush was on her cheeks, a warm light in her eyes that had grown larger for him in delicious surprise.

"Who is that young fellow who just left you?"

"Oh, one of my lovers," she answered coquettishly, dropping her eyes before his.

"He your lover!" repeated Curran in his imperious fashion. "You're not for such as he, Jennie."

Her heart fluttered in sweet fear at the meaning she thought in his words. She was trying to walk very slowly, but how fast they seemed to pass the houses.

"So I told him," she said.

"You did well, then," and he looked down admiringly on the girl. "You are a fine woman. I don't suppose you know it."

Jane Graves tried to look as if it was news to her, and Curran went on. "Few women are prettier. There are fine prizes for such as you in this world if you will only wait." He continued thoughtfully, "Men have to work for distinction; a pretty face brings it to women."

"What sort of prizes?" And she trusted herself to look up at him. How grand he was, with his firm, strong face. If he only had a touch of weakness in him that might bend down to her.

"Position, money, power."

"No woman cares for those." And she believed it as she spoke, looking away over the river.

"What then?" he asked, smiling. "Those things are what all men are working for, I suppose."

"Women care for but one thing."

Sometimes the climax of a character is reached only in old age, when storms have wreaked their fury for a lifetime on a soul. Sometimes it comes in childhood, with threescore years of decline to come after it. It was at this moment that this girl's life reached its moral height. If she could but have kept it.

"That is love," she added softly. "It is their lives; they hope only for that; they dream only of it."

Curran laughed, but gently, as he took her hands at parting, pressing them perhaps unconsciously, yet no man can be wholly careless to such beauty as hers.

"It is only because women are more foolish than men, not because they are more devoted, that they are able to make such absurd mistakes."

She smiled on him as radiantly as a red petaled rose unfolding its glowing heart to the morning sun—the sun that gives everything and wants nothing, and stood half turned watching his retiring form. The road at this point passed near a deserted ruin, once a brick sawmill, which had shorn the hills and valleys around of their pride, now a favorite trysting place for lovers of moonlight nights like this would be. Curran was just entering under an arch, where once had swung a heavy oaken door which long ago had served some shivering family for a week's firewood.

He went in and did not once turn. How cruel men are. Perhaps, she told herself, he is to meet there some messenger of the Great league he had told her about, and they will plan together some bold stroke. It was beautiful to have such power, even if it made him forget this one poor girl, whose heart longed so eagerly for another smile.

The whole world seemed glorified to the girl as she walked on. She had loitered so long that the sun was now almost setting, with his flowing robe of carmine about him, and the whole landscape seemed in a rapture of silent worship. Jane Graves was like one in a dream—her home, which she could tell from its cheap dreary counterparts, might have been a palace; the path along in front of it, beaten by so many faltering footsteps, seemed only pleasantly familiar to her. What had she seen to envy in anybody's life that had not her dear hope!

But down the hill comes a great white horse, tossing his mane and curveting in the pride of his strength and beauty.

Its rider who held the rein so gracefully must be young Philip, the mill owner's son; he had just finished college, they said. So that was the young man Bertha Ellingsworth was engaged to; not ill looking, and he rode well. The girl smiled to herself. "But Bertha Ellingsworth had not seen Curran."

"Did he lift his hat to me?" She looked inquiringly about her. "There is no one else, and his black eyes seemed to know me, too; how odd!" thought the girl, as she walked on more hastily, and the horse and its rider disappeared in a cloud of dust.

"And it seems as if I had seen him somewhere, too."

CHAPTER V.

A RUN BY MOONLIGHT.

Bertha lay back indolently in her favorite armchair, watching the deepening twilight from her parlor window. Her eyes were almost closed, and Philip, affecting to be interested in Mr. Ellingsworth's conversation, thought he might look at her as fondly as he chose without discovery and rebuke. He was sure he was not noticed, but the girl was quite enjoying his silent offering—so long as he did not guess she perceived it. If a girl must have a lover, Philip did very well. But her lover was no divinity to her; she saw all his faults as clearly as anybody; not with impatience, however; that was not her temperament. For example, he was too short and his shoulders were too slight. She never forgot it for an instant. But then he always did what she said, and that was very convenient, and yet she was half provoked with him for it. A man ought to command a woman's love, not try to coax it from her. He thought quite too much of her for what she returned him; he ought to be stern and cold to her sometimes, and give her a chance to be something besides an ungrateful recipient. But perhaps she would not like him at all in that character. She suddenly opened her eyes wide and looked curiously at her lover; there is nothing so chilling as such a look as that, and Philip winced under it.

"Well, I suppose you two are bursting with tender confidences," smiled Mr. Ellingsworth, as he rose to his feet; "I really won't stay a minute longer." He moved toward the door, then he smiled and looked around; he had thought of something very funny. "Now Philip, my dear boy, you mustn't be too sure of her just because she seems so affectionate. That is where a young man makes his worst mistake. As long as there is another man in the world, he may have hope, that is, the other man."

His daughter looked coolly after him "Must you go? Why we shall die of ennui. We shall have to take a walk ourselves. Excuse me, Philip, while I get ready."

Left alone, the young man rose and went to the window and looked out at the evening sky. There was a little frown on his face. "What an unpleasant way of talking Bertha's father had. One would think he believed in nothing. There was no danger of his feeling any too sure of her; how far away she seemed to him. The idea of marriage seemed vague and dreamlike, and yet he had her promise."

"You may adjust my shawl for me." His vexation fled, and he smiled with the sweet complacency of possession as he laid the delicate bit of lace about her warm shoulders. To-night would be a good time to turn his idea into reality, and ask her when——

"But you must promise me one thing," she said, standing close to him for one moment.

"What is that, Bertha, dear?" he asked with guilty uneasiness.

She put her soft white hand in his so charmingly that he was suddenly sure it could be nothing hard she would require.

"I promise," he assented.

"No love making in the ruin, if I let you take me there."

"Why, Bertha!" he exclaimed so sorrowfully that he showed his whole plan. The girl laughed.

"You are too cunning by half, Mr. Philip, but then you know love making in the saw mill is too common. Why, it is the rendezvous of all the factory hands. No, I couldn't think of it for a moment."

"Then I won't insist on taking you to the old saw mill."

"Oh, yes! it is charming by moonlight."

"One would think you hadn't any heart." Philip did not confess the peculiar charm this woman's very coldness had for him; there was some quality in it that was irresistibly exciting to his nature. Perhaps it was the presence of an unconscious reserve of passion, never yet revealed, that he felt in her, that kept his heart ever warm, and his eyes ever tender for its unveiling.

The round faced servant girl had come up from the kitchen, and stood awkwardly at the door.

"Yes, you may light the gas now, Annie; we are going out." She laid her hand lightly on Philip's arm as they went down the walk. "I must really have a maid. That Annie is too clumsy for me to endure in the parlor or dining room. Oh, yes, I probably have got a heart; some time it will frighten you, perhaps."

They walked slowly along the street, passing the very spot where Tommie Bowler had offered his poor little all to Jane Graves only an hour or two ago. Their feet trod carelessly on the bits of grass the nervous lover had scattered along the path.

"But you haven't told me about the meeting. Did the agitator have auburn curls, as I said? That is the clearest idea I have got of a hero."

As he told her his adventure they reached the ruin and went in. The moonlight poured through the dismantled roof, and made a white track for itself over the uneven floor, leaving the rest of the interior in the shadow. Such as remained of the fallen rafters made convenient benches for visitors, who might easily enough imagine themselves in some old world ruin. And the young mill owner's son and Bertha, the hem of whose garment had never touched poverty, seated themselves where many a penniless young fellow had wooed some pretty weaver maid to share his destitution, all for love—soon starved out of both their lives.

Philip felt all his last night's enthusiasm coming over him again, as he described the meeting of the hopeless poor and the life of the family that had taken him in. He seemed to be again thrilled with Curran's eloquence as he pictured his noble presence, and tried to repeat his vivid sentences. Was Bertha listening so patiently to him or only idly watching the shadows as they shifted with the moon? He hoped she was touched. She could help him so much to do something for the thousand souls in the mills if there was anything could be done. And then it seemed so sweet to have an earnest thought and hope in common—one more bond to unite them.

"But what can I do, Bertha? It is all so mixed up. Do you suppose my father would listen to me? But if he would, what can I propose? If I tell him the people are poor and unhappy, he knows all that. I can't ask him to divide all his wealth with them; that wouldn't last so many very long, and then he couldn't employ them any more—they would be spoiled for work, and we would all starve together."

"I wish I could see him," said the girl slowly.

He looked at her blankly.

"Why?"

Suddenly a double tread of feet without, and the forms of two men, one much taller than the other, blocked the doorway.

"Hush, then," whispered Philip excitedly. "There he stands."

The men came forward till they stood directly in the path of the moonlight, which seemed to clothe them with its silver sheen. No need to tell her which was he; the girl bent eagerly forward and fixed her eyes on the majestic figure that stood with folded arms.

"I am very late," began the shorter man apologetically.

Curran did not reply, and the man went on in a minute more. "What is the news? I want to report your village, you know."

"There is no news. It is the same old story. What is the good of reporting and reporting, and then doing nothing?" The words escaped between his teeth like the staccato tones of a cornet. "I am sick of the word 'wait;' it is the resource of the weak."

"But we are weak. Give us time."

Curran unfolded his arms with a gesture of impatience.

"The injustice has got its growth; it has fattened on our flesh and blood, and sucked out the life of untold generations before us." His eyes shone fiercely on the man of caution. "I believe the time has come to destroy it, and the crime of murder lies at our consciences for every crushed soul sacrificed for our delay."

Philip fancied Bertha trembled.

"But," began the stranger, in the metallic voice of the objector, "the officers of the league think the laborers are not ready."

"No, nor will they ever be; they have submitted too long. But they are always good for action if somebody will lead them. They hang on our lips, but we do not speak."

"Yes, we are spreading intelligence, sending out orators like you; we are arranging political campaigns. By and by capital will be more reasonable."

"Do you fancy then," retorted Curran, bitterly, "that the rich will willingly open their coffers to the logical workman, out of whose earnings they have filled them? Isn't it too delightful to be able to build a palace for a home, and create another paradise for a garden; to marry off their sons and daughters when the first coo of love trembles on their young lips? Then will they divide," and he raised his voice with terrible emphasis, "when there is no escape from it. As long as the people submit, if it be till the trump of doom, so long the lords and masters will defraud them of the price of their labor; so long their wives and daughters will look down complacently on the sufferings of the million, one of whom starves for every piece of finery they smile to wear."

Philip felt Bertha tremble again, but her eyes never once wavered.

"What do you propose?"

"I don't know," muttered Curran, turning his head half away, "but when I see the silent raging in the hearts of the poor, when I see the riches squeezed out of their scant, ill fed blood, I am mad with impatience. But I suppose all great changes come most beneficently if they are slow. Then there are no heart sickening reactions. Come out into the open air. It seems close here."

The two men went out and the indistinct murmur of their voices was all that could be heard.

"How do you like my hero?" said Philip, pleased that Bertha should have a chance to learn from the same source whence he had been so stirred. Now, she could sympathize perfectly with him, in the new idea that he felt must have such a great influence over his life.

"He is coming back," she whispered breathlessly, "alone."

Curran looked in astonishment at two figures starting toward him out of the shadows. He recognized them at once.

"Well, I hope you may have learned some useful truths," he said scornfully, looking the young man full in the face.

Bertha's lip quivered, and she came close to him in the moonlight and laid her white hand on his arm. "We did not mean to overhear your secrets," she said earnestly; "but surely it could do no harm to listen to such beautiful words. They seemed to be wasted on the one you meant them for."

"We did not mean to overhear your secrets."

Philip looked at Bertha in startled surprise; he hardly knew her; then he glanced at Curran, whose curled lip softened its stern lines. The girl's bonnet had fallen back on her neck, and her face was turned up toward his in the perfection of graceful entreaty, her big blue eyes showing dark in the evening. The agitator glanced at her sparkling diamonds, and the rich lace shawl that lay over her shoulders, then back into the beautiful upturned face, and at last his eyes fell before hers. His boldness was gone; his scorn and contempt for the women of the rich changed to timidity before her.

"Don't distress yourself, my dear lady," he said at last; "there is no harm done, I am sure."

As his tense mood relaxed, the charm that had so transformed the girl seemed broken, and she drew back as if in surprise at finding herself so near him.

The walk home was a silent one, till almost the end.

"Do you know what I am going to do tomorrow, Bertha? I am going to put on the old clothes again."

"Don't you think it rather boyish?"

"I'm in earnest this time. I am going to learn how to make cloth, and find out just how hard the work is, and just how—why Bertha, are you yawning?"

They had reached the doorway. She looked very sweet, even when smothering a yawn with her two fingers, as she stood on the step above him, and gazed off on the river. His foolish heart began to beat.

"Bertha, we are not at the saw mill now, and"——

She smiled. "But you were not to say anything if I let you take me there, and I have let you, haven't I?"

"But aren't you ever going to consent to"——

"There," she stamped her foot playfully. "You are almost breaking your promise;" then she looked at his reproachful face and let him take her hand and kiss it. "You know there is a sort of solemnity in the kind of business like talk you want so much. But I'll promise this: if you will be patient for just one month, you can say what you please to me."

Philip went off in great glee, and his horse Joe could not leap too high to suit him, for what Bertha had said was almost what he asked. One month from today—that would be a Friday early in the morning.

CHAPTER VI.

A DAY OFF.

Jane Graves was putting on her hat and faded plaid shawl for another dreary day's work. She hated it with all the passion of her nature. She saw nothing in it but slavery and degradation, and in her impatience thought she would rather die than drag out her life thus. Somebody must do the work, but not such as she, surely.

"Come here, my dear."

She had been lingering aimlessly, only that she dreaded to turn her feet toward the factory, whose tolling bell rang sternly in her ears. Now she approached her mother's bed with a gentler expression on her face.

The thin hands were laid on her arm, and the sick woman drew the girl's head down on the pillow beside her own.

"Was I ever so pretty as you, I wonder?" she said wistfully. "They used to say I was the prettiest in the village." And the sunken eyes brightened at sweet memories, the sweetest in the world to a woman.

"It did you little good, mother," said the girl in a muffled voice.

In a moment more she started up——

"There, mother, I am late again; a quarter day's pay lost, and a scolding gained."

The sick woman's eyes opened wide, and the girl waited one sad minute more, to see how terribly white the poor face looked even against her pillow.

"I had something to say, I thought," said the woman eagerly, "but I can't remember, I am so sick. But perhaps it wasn't anything. You may go now, dear; I am sorry I kept you."

The girl pinned her shawl about her. What good of looking in the glass? It could only tell her she was pretty, as her mother used to be, and remind her what a fool she was to expect a different fate. Fifteen years, and she might be sick and broken on this very bed, perhaps telling her own unhappy child how pretty she used to be. The girl shuddered at the picture as she went out of her mother's room.

"Oh! I remember now," called the sick woman.

"Did you want the tea put near you?" asked the girl, coming back wearily.

"It is not that—but—but you are not to go to work today. Somebody is coming to see you. He wants you to live with him."

"What, to marry me?" exclaimed the girl in astonishment.

"He didn't speak of that," smiled her mother, languidly, "but I can't talk any more, I am so tired."

Jane Graves had learned one lesson of poverty, not to hope. So after this strange announcement of her mother's she only laid off her hat and shawl, and waited. After looking idly out of the window for a while, and seeing nothing that had not worn itself into her very soul years ago, the vague woman instinct stirred in her and she moved about the house arranging things. She found a little map that hung in the sitting room a little awry and straightened it. It was a dingy map of China that had come once with a pound of tea, and she wanted to throw it away, but the wall looked too bare without anything. She took down a couple of ugly little gift chromos her father had placed on the mantelpiece and tore them up in disgust. There seemed nothing else to do, there was so little to arrange. She wasn't so sure but it was better in the mill—perhaps it was a blessing the poor were kept so many hours in its grim walls, where at least there was but little chance to think. What was there to long for in such homes and such leisure as this?

She stepped to the closet and took out a well thumbed book and sat down. She turned two or three pages, and then counted how many times she had read them before, and she felt sick with the foolish hopes and dreams the oft read book had used to wake in her.

She laid it away with a sigh and picked up an old newspaper. How slow the forenoon went.

She read down the advertising columns. How many beautiful things in the world, and all for sale! Somebody must have the money to buy them or the stores wouldn't be running. Where was it all? Did anybody work any harder for it than her father and herself? Jane Graves opened her little pocketbook and shook it over the table; but it was as empty as the day she bought it.

Then there came a light tap on the street door. This must be the "gentleman," this tall, elegant figure in a checked summer suit; and he actually lifted his hat to her.

"My name is Ellingsworth."

He needn't have told her; he had figured in the girl's fancy for years as the very impersonation of rank and wealth.

"I called about a maid. Mr. Graves gave me leave to speak with his daughter. Is she in?"

"I suppose I am the one. Will you come in?"

She watched him as he crossed the room to the nearest chair. How much lighter he walked than she could; and one might have thought from his unconsciousness that he had been used to just such a miserable room as this all his life. He showed no surprise at her being the prospective maid servant; no doubt he knew it all the time, and the way he spoke was only a part of his good manners. But then she could not imagine his showing surprise at anything.

"There will be but little to do," Mr. Ellingsworth continued, looking at her face and not seeming to see how ill she was dressed. "There is only my daughter; you may have seen her, yes? and myself. The wages will be small," and he named them and smiled apologetically, as if he expected her to decline. "Your father spoke to me as if you did not like the factories."

Out at service; well, why not? Could it be any more degrading than the life she lived? and such wages, too. Why, she could dress quite prettily then; and her girlish heart fluttered. And she could leave ugly things and rude people, and breathe perfumes and have only graceful surroundings; what matter if they were not hers?

She would be lifted right up in the very atmosphere she longed for. Yesterday she had envied the Ellingsworths, to-morrow she could share their beautiful life with them. Why not?

She lifted her bright eyes to his face. It was in half profile at this moment, and she could see his hair was just touched with gray. How could men in this world ever grow old? He was smooth shaved, showing in full effect the delicate, cynical curve of his thin lip and the clearly defined outlines of his chin. He must have been very oddly affected by the poverty pictured so unmistakably about him; but there was not the smallest sign of it on his well bred face.

"I will go," she said abruptly; "when do you want me?"

"I shall be away for a fortnight," he said, rising, with his own admirable smile. "You can come when I return."

She rose too, but could think of nothing proper to say. But how poverty stricken she would look in her factory clothes. Her spirits had fallen already.

"By the way," Mr. Ellingsworth turned, as if a sudden business item had struck him. It was a peculiar expressionless monotone he used sometimes when on delicate subjects that seemed to have as little personal quality as a printed page. "I always pay in advance; be kind enough to accept your first month's wages and our bargain will be closed."

The girl found herself alone, looking at the crisp, fresh looking bank bills he had placed in her hands. "How thoughtful these rich people are. They have time for it, I suppose."

Her wardrobe was very simple. There hung over the back of the chair the dull check of a merino, chosen long ago to endure the most service with the least show of it. On the bureau before the mirror was a paper box holding a discarded ribbon or two, pink or cardinal, and two or three pieces of cheap jewelry the girl was too proud to wear.

"It won't take me long to pack," she said aloud.

She suddenly took a pretty attitude of listening. She had closed the door into the sick chamber in a moment more and stood in the middle of the sitting room when Curran came in.

"Why, you don't look very sick, Jennie. I have to walk to Lockout by 8 o'clock, but thought I would look in just a minute."

"I am going to leave the mill." How preoccupied he seemed to-night. "I am going to leave the mill, Mr. Curran," the girl repeated with beating heart. He might not like her new plan, and at the very thought of his disapproval she felt all her bright hopes taking to themselves wings; and the old dreary picture of factory gates and soiled calico dresses came back.

"Going away, little girl?" He seemed to speak with a slight effort, as if his mind was not on what he said. "Well, I suppose you can't be any worse off, but we shall miss you."

And was that all he had to say when he thought she was going forever out of his life—had he no reproaches for her?

"I am not going far," she began hurriedly.

"There would be no use going far." He had seated himself on the other side of the table from her, and rested his face on his hand. "It is just the same everywhere. Wherever there are a thousand souls ten will grind the rest. I don't suppose the rich mean to be so unjust, not all of them; they don't stop to notice that they are getting all the good things in the world. It never occurs to them to wonder why the great earth seems to produce only for them."

Jane Graves sat back in her chair, her hands crossed in her lap. Why didn't he talk about her just a little? She looked up at his absorbed face wistfully.

"Why, Jennie, sometimes I get so tired trying to stand up against it all, so sick of my own heartache, that I can make nobody share with me." He had risen to his feet and was walking moodily across the room. That very night he must pour out all the precious energy of his soul into dull, stolid ears, that seemed so slow to understand. A hall full of strange faces would look up coldly at him, and his hot words would be quenched as they fell from his lips, in the unmoved depths of their hearts. It seemed so vain, all he could do or say, and he felt so tired to-night, longing, instead, to rest his head on some gentle breast, and be soothed with some foolish words of comfort and tenderness.

The girl had risen, too, and stood resting the back of her hand on the table. But her eyes dared not lift to his. She tried to speak, and her lips trembled so that her voice came strange and unfamiliar.

"I am sorry for you. Is there no one, no woman?" she half whispered.

"Women do not care for such as I," he said, smiling a little bitterly. "They love light and pleasant things. I am too serious. I should only frighten them; they could not understand."

Then he came toward her with a softer light in his eyes.

"You are a good little girl, Jennie." He had taken her trembling hands, which only trembled the more. "I shall miss you very much. What is the trouble with your eyes, Jennie, you can't look at me? I am going now."

Then she raised her eyes, like lightning, to his face.

"Oh, let me comfort you," she cried. "I would die for you. I will ask nothing back but a smile now and then. Nobody can ever love you like me."

His face was troubled, but cold and impassive as rock. He still held her hands, as she sank in a heart breaking flood of tears at his feet.

After a moment he bent down in pity, and gathered her trembling form in his arms. How the sobs seemed to shake her. He smoothed back her wavy hair from the low forehead, and even kissed her wet cheeks. But all he said was:

"Poor little girl, poor little Jennie."

For an instant she lay still as a nestling child. Then she sprang back from him, and fled into her mother's room, and wept and moaned for shame and heartache, until the calm of weariness came over her, as nature's blessed gift to her hopeless children.

CHAPTER VII.

A TEST.

"Isn't your father going?"

It was the same evening, and Philip Breton was assisting Bertha into his beach wagon for a twilight drive.

"Father has left town for a few days. Didn't you know? Suppose you let me have the back seat. The world is large enough to afford us a seat apiece to-night."

Bertha adjusted her wraps and the horses stepped off down the street as gayly as if their driver had not been disappointed.

There was not very much conversation today; indeed there never was unless Philip afforded it. Bertha considered she did her part in looking well, smiling prettily at his witticisms, with now and then a remark, if she felt inclined. But today Philip was moody and silent. So Bertha gave herself up to the sensuous delight of riding, and only spoke in mild exclamations of admiration of the scenery as they left the village behind and followed up the winding river.

But suddenly Philip saw a man's form swaying easily while he took great strides along the footpath.

"Curran," he exclaimed, and stopped his horses close beside him. The man turned, and one might have thought he did not recognize the occupants of the carriage, except that there was the least bit of a flush on his face, which bore the lines of interrupted meditation. Then he bowed slightly to Philip.

"And you don't recollect me, I suppose," smiled Bertha.

"I am not so stupid," he said, letting his steel blue eyes rest admiringly upon her.

"We are going to Lockout, too. You must get in with us."

"No, I won't crowd you; don't move." And he turned a little away from them as if to continue his walk.

"Certainly you must!" said Bertha; "see, I have a whole seat to myself and it is so stupid. Please."

And Curran took the seat she offered him, holding back her wraps till he was seated, and then releasing them.

"Do you think I shall ever learn to weave cotton cloth?" asked Philip, to call his attention to their day's work together.

"I presume so, if you really mean to. But it is lucky you haven't got your board to pay meanwhile."

But Curran did not smile, and was very ill at ease. He seemed to be lifted, body and soul, into the very life he was accustomed to rebuke. The beautiful horses of the rich were harnessed today to his pleasure with their gold plate trimmings. What right had he here? He said nothing of it, but felt intensely the falseness of his position. The delicate springs hurt him, and every sign of lavish wealth in the dress of his companions. He wanted no interests with the rich; his life work must be against them; he desired no association with a luxurious manner of life which he ought to upbraid. There must not be one chain of gold to unite him with the wealthy class in whom he saw the enemies of the people.

And yet he was taking delight in this woman's presence, a new delight, such as the women of the poor had never given him. And was not she the very essence of luxury and refinement? He hated himself for it, but for all he tried to look elsewhere he kept seeing the sparkle of the diamonds on the whitest hand he had ever seen. He enjoyed the lilies of the valley set in mosaic at her throat, which showed its creamy white against the delicate ruffles, and the comb with its band of Roman gold almost the shade of the rippling hair it restrained. But were not these the very extravagances the poor had to struggle to earn for her? He ought to be fulminating withering sentences for such as she.

"I will get out at the rocks and walk the rest of the way," said Curran at last, as they could catch a glimpse of Lookout in the distance. "The workmen I want to talk to would hardly understand my coming with a carriage and pair."

The "rocks" came but a mile from Lockout and the horses trotted so well that the spot was reached in a few moments more. The road at this point had been cut through a side hill of sandstone by dint of great blasting and the jagged edges jutted out angrily at the passers by.

"There must be a wonderful landscape on the other side of the rocks," said Bertha, as Philip stopped his horses for Curran to alight. "Have you plenty of time?" she asked, before the workman could express his thanks.

"An hour to spare."

She looked wistfully at the envious rocks that shut them in and then at Curran's grave face.

"I would so like to see that view from the top of the rocks if I had some one to help me."

Curran's face suddenly flushed with pleasure. "I should like to help you."

In a minute more Bertha was climbing the rocks with her strange escort, and Philip sat holding his horses quite a little distance back.

"You didn't talk very much during our drive," said Bertha, as she stood with her companion looking off down the valley. "Is it so wicked of us to be rich?"

He shot a sudden deprecating look at her. "Don't force me so far. I cannot say it now."

Bertha smiled. "Then leave me out of it; say Philip instead."

"He is enjoying the fruits of terrible injustice."

"But would his father have been rich unless he had deserved it?" asked Bertha.

"Is it a just reward of merit, then, that a thousand human creatures should well nigh starve, and he be rich? If he has deserved to be rich, you must say they have merited starvation."

The girl liked to hear his earnest, thrilling tones, and watch his eyes flash and his nostrils dilate with such rare passion.

"Is it just," he went on, "that no matter how unweariedly a laborer works, his idle neighbor, as surely as the sun sets, should lay intolerable tribute on his profits so that he must stay forever poor? Is a day's work worth nothing? Then why does it bring in some capitalist thousands of dollars for a stroke of his pen?"

Bertha understood but little of what he was saying, but she could look intently at him with wide open blue eyes, which had a pretty trick of changing expression as if in closest sympathy with a speaker. Curran felt no one had half listened to him before, that at last every word told, and he was strangely excited by the sweet mystery of their common inspiration.

"Great wealth is made up of 10,000 trickling streams, drained from the paltry earnings of as many defrauded workmen. Mere cunning scheming ought not enable a man to turn aside the great river of plenty, which flows for all men. Why these shrewd business men, whom so many praise, have so ingeniously placed their chains on the laborer, that the harder he struggles to escape from poverty, he only turns the faster the wheel that grinds out fortunes for his masters, and draws him in at last to be crushed."

He hesitated for her to ask him some questions, and perhaps it was already as plain to her as to him. At any rate, she only looked off to the west where the glow of sunset was fast fading, and then back into his face regretfully.

"I suppose we ought to go down," she said.

"Why, yes, I had forgotten whether it was night or day."

He took her hand gently as if he touched a holy thing, and his face softened like a child's. He would not have let her fall for the world. She had taught him, how he did not stop to think, that there was a rare and exquisite strain of joy in life. She had spiritualized womanhood to him; he suddenly saw in it an essence so pure and fine it might redeem the world. An hour ago, he had been so wretched, and now a vague, sweet hope he cared not to define was born in him. As he stood upon the road bed and reached up his hands to help Bertha down, their eyes met for a moment, and then she trusted herself to him in such gentle surrender that a mist floated before his sight. She almost fell, and he must needs gather her perfect form in his arms to save her.

Philip had been idly snapping his whip and looking up the road. He thought he saw in the distance a number of men with guns hurrying in his direction and before them—yes, it must be a dog; an odd hour of the day for hunting. He might as well have his horses turned about; he could see Curran and Bertha clambering down from the rocks. So it happened that at the moment Bertha came so near falling—in fact, did fall, into Curran's arms—Philip was sitting with his back toward them, faced toward home.

But by this time the hunters with guns were nearer; the blacksmith had rushed out of his shop to look at the dog who bounded along with his mouth to the ground dropping foam as he ran.

The dog was mad. Bertha saw the great white creature, and grew pale as death, and pressed back against the rocky wall in despair. Curran saw him too, and had not even to make up his mind to die to save this woman. It was a matter of course. He stepped out directly in front of her without one word, and bending forward, waited. The mad dog might pass by. But no, in an instant more the beast was upon him, and like lightning Curran had reached out his hands of iron and caught his shaggy throat as in a vise.

[To be Continued.]

Brilliants.

Out of the heart's abundance let some cheer
Be spoken while your friend hath ears to hear;
Deck, if you will, with flowers his place of rest,
But fix the sweetest on his living breast.
—Rev. O. E. Daggett.

And so we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies; and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them, too:
Who loses and who wins; who's in and who's out;
And take upon ourselves the mystery of things,
As if we were God's spies.
—Shakespeare.

The grand debate,
The popular harangue, the tart reply,
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh—I long to know them all.
—Cowper.

I hold it Truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp with divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.
—Tennyson.

What various scenes, and oh, what scenes of woe,
Are witnessed by that red and struggling beam!
The fevered patient, from his pallet low,
Through crowded hospitals beholds it steam:
The ruined maiden trembles at its gleam;
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail;
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale
Trims her sick infant's couch, and soothes his feeble wail.
—Walter Scott.

Deep-seated inflammations, as inflamation of the liver, chronic gastritis and inflammation of the blabber and other pelvic organs, are often relieved by poultices thoroughly applied.