

"Confess! What have I to confess? You saw all!"

"It does not relate to this crime attempted on me, but another one."

"I do not understand you."

"You understand me only too well. This is not your first visit to this house, for one night ten years ago you came here. You climbed up, as you did to-night, in this very room. This place has terrible recollections for you."

"Who are you?" cried Larouette.

"You came here," continued Roger, "and you saw a man at the secretary with his back turned. He did not hear you. Your two fists fell upon his white head, and then you tried to strangle him. After that, as the poor old man struggled, and you found him stronger than you had thought, in your fear you shot him, and then you left with your pockets filled with his money. Larouette was dead and you were his assassin."

"Who are you? What are you?" gasped the wretch.

"Confess your crime. Here is M. De Ligne-rolles, magistrate, and M. Lacroix, and they both hear you. Confess, if you wish that they have mercy for you later."

"Tell me, first, who are you?"

"You did not know me. It is true they thought me dead. Remember one whom you commenced to murder, and then you were court-martialed and condemned for your treachery, when you were Matthias Zuber. Do you remember now?"

"Larouette! Larouette!" said he, falling on his knees, which refused longer to support him, which movement brought him beside the mannikin which Roger had made to receive the murderer's blows.

"Roger Larouette, after ten years!"

All regarded this trembling wretch. He was but too clearly the assassin. Pale, haggard and frightened, he was an object of the most abject terror. Yet Roger needed his admission that he was the criminal. Larouette saw his poignant on the floor, and in a second he seized it and before Tristot could prevent he had plunged it into his own breast. The blood poured out of the horrible wound as he lay stretched upon the floor.

"He had plunged it into his own breast."

"Dead!" murmured Roger, with a movement of despair.

The two magistrates knelt by him. He was not dead.

"He still lives," said M. Lacroix. "We may yet save him."

"He will die within five minutes," said Tristot.

"Speak! speak!" said M. De Ligne-rolles, "in the name of God, before whom you must soon appear."

Leaving over the form of Larouette, hardly breathing, Roger listened.

"I killed Larouette, and Larouette is innocent. I did it for vengeance, but I am not the only guilty one; I had an accomplice."

And here the feeble voice stopped, and Larouette was dead.

"How dare I ask your forgiveness?" said M. Lacroix, with emotion.

"And I!" said M. De Ligne-rolles, "have much to atone for, and, please God, I will at least be the means of restoring your good and honorable name."

"All is forgiven," said Roger. "You thought you were doing your duty. All I ask is the restoration of my good name, for my child's sake. Alas! you cannot restore my poor, broken-hearted wife."

While they were talking Tristot stepped to the window to wipe his eyes, and as he looked out they wandered mechanically towards that little balcony where the unhappy young mother and child had stood on that fatal night ten years before. The moon shone through a rift in the waving branches of the chestnut trees, and Tristot felt sure that he saw the white, upturned face of a woman, and in that one brief moment he thought he looked like that of the unhappy woman whose death was so deplorable.

He did not believe in ghosts or the re-embodiment of spirits, or he would have been afraid, as it was he gave a half-articulate cry and sprang through the open window and from there to the ground, some six or seven feet, and in an instant was speeding across the lawn that Roger had newly trimmed and restored to its former beauty, for it grieved him to the heart to see the place which was sacred to him by a thousand dear memories so neglected and forgotten.

Tristot, in a few leaps, had crossed the little space and with the agility of a monkey he climbed up one of the columns which supported the balcony, and when there he found the inanimate body of the poor young wife who had been supposed dead so many years.

As soon as he satisfied himself that Henriette was not dead he gave a peculiar whistle, which caused Tristot to suddenly turn to the window, as if it were a sign which he well knew, and he answered it by jumping inconspicuously out upon the lawn and rushing to Tristot, who said in a whisper:

"Bring the rest and lights quick and take care Larouette is kept away from this woman until I give the signal. If I am not greatly mistaken it is the last wife."

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## BRIGHTEST AND BEST.

Brightest and best of the young of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;  
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant footsteps are laid.  
Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining,  
Low lies his head with the beams of the star,  
Angels adore him in slumber reclining,  
Mother and Monarch and Saviour of all.



Say, shall you yield him in costly devotion,  
Odors from Eden or offerings divine,  
Gems from the mountain or pearls from the ocean,  
Myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?  
Vainly you offer each ample oblation,  
Vainly with gifts would his favor secure,  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
Dearest to God are the prayers of the poor.

## ONE CHRISTMAS.

BY OLIVE HARPER.

"That there Marthy Avery is the foolish-est critter that ever lived, I swan to man! Here's her father dead, and she left with all that brood of her stepmother's young ones; and instead of sendin' 'em to their grandfathers she ups and says she is goin' to support 'em herself. She won't get my Jabez if that's her idee, for I'll just put my foot down."

"Martha is a likely girl."

"There's three gals and a boy baby, and they hain't no call nor claim on her. There's them as would make her a good, forlorned provider, but no man won't take a hull family on his hands to one. It's bad enough marryin' widowers, but nobody wants a lot of sickly young ones a-eatin' up all the substance of a farm. No, indeed!"

"Well, you know, Mrs. Hemphill, Marthy feels as if the children h'es as good a right as herself to the farm; they was her father's."

"Yes; but he didn't make no will, and the farm and the settin' out was all Marthy's own mother's, so nobody can't dispute her claim. Besides, what does a slip of a girl like that know 'bout carryin' on a farm, I'd like to know?"

"It's too bad; but, as you say, she'll find how hard it is to manage a farm. I am greatly exercised for her, and I'll ask the sinterhood to make her a subject of an address to the throne of grace," said Mrs. Pringle as she gave a little sigh, and folded up her knitting to take her seat at Mr. Hemphill's tea table, for she had ridden over to spend the afternoon and have a good visit.

Jabez, Mrs. Hemphill's only son, and his father came in and took their accustomed places, and the father asked a word of blessing, and reached his hand out and caught a biscuit at the same moment that he delivered his "amen."

Jabez was a handsome, frank young fellow, who worked very hard and was a man of many virtues.

He found time, somehow, after the multitudinous duties on a farm were done, to study, and to slip over to the Avery farm very often.

Being a steady and handsome young fellow, his mother naturally looked on him with pride, and now she felt that she was doing her duty as a wise mother in discomfiting such a foolish action on Marthy's part as adopting her three little half sisters and baby brother.

Meanwhile, Marthy was working, as if her life depended upon it, over a refractory churning, and her pretty face was wrinkled into a frown, and her cheeks flamed crimson, and little sparks of anger seemed to shoot from her eyes that had yet a suspicion of tears not far off.

She jerked the dasher with vindictive little movements, as if she wished she had some particular person under the dasher, and without it did seem as if that butter was bewitched.

"I don't wonder it won't come," said Marthy, at last. "Hateful old thing! As I depended upon her, or as if I wanted her Jabez. I guess I can manage a farm; at any rate, I must try, for with God's help I will care of these poor little children. Addie can help take care of the others—and I think she is cruel—Oh!"

This exclamation was brought forth by the sudden sight of Jabez, as he sprang over the fence and walked into the well kept kitchen without a word of warning or invitation.

He walked directly up to Marthy and clasped both of his hands around hers, and she held the "dasher," and said cheerily: "Well, Marthy, how are you? Here you sit down and let me do this, and I can look at you all the while, and that will pay me for my work."

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wiped away her tears, and sun-  
curly tendrils of her hair; and  
knew it his strong arm was a  
waist and he had kissed her.

In a few minutes she was  
calm, but her dignity had  
was only a weak woman at  
was striving to do her plain  
tried to free herself from the st.  
arms that held her in so close an  
forting a clasp; for, poor child, I  
was only a week dead!

"Don't, Jabez," was all she co.  
"And why not, Marthy? Why a  
not love—"

"Oh, dear!" said Marthy, despairing.  
"Oh, dear! Oh, Jabez, please don't, for  
this is not possible."

"And why not, Marthy? Ever since we  
were able to talk I have known you and  
loved you; and all my life I have been  
trying to deserve you. You have loved  
me, too, haven't you? Well, then, why  
isn't it possible, please tell me?"

"Haven't you heard? Don't you know?  
Jabez, I feel as if it is my solemn duty to  
take care of these poor little children, and  
not let them suffer. Father left nothing  
but the farm; but there was always  
enough for us all, and I must try to do  
the best I can for them. And your—you  
—I think I better not see each other  
any more, for—"

"There, that's just enough. You are  
willing to throw off for the sake of  
those children who have no earthly claim  
upon you. You could send them to their  
poor old grandfather, but you prefer to  
shoulder the burden yourself, and destroy  
all your dreams of happiness, and devote  
your life to them, and forget the life  
long love I had for you?"

"It is my duty, Jabez."

"And you are willing to sacrifice all to  
them, and they may turn out ungrateful  
or wicked; and you know me, and that I  
love you dearly, little Marthy, and always  
will."

"I can't help it, Jabez. I can't see it  
in the same light. I feel as if the hand of  
the dead lay upon me, and I must obey.  
Besides, I do it because I feel it is right.  
Don't make it harder for me than it is,  
Jabez."

"Marthy, my little wife."

"I would be very happy so, Jabez; but  
I know your mother never would con-  
sent, and I couldn't bear to cause a dis-  
agreement in your family."

"I can manage that, Marthy, if you will  
agree to be my wife next Monday. We  
will go over to Wilkesbarre to get married;  
there quietly, and return and settle down  
at once into a new edition of Darby and  
Joan. What do you say?"

"Marthy threw off her head, and  
reflected as well as she could. Mother  
and father were both dead, and she had  
no one to advise or counsel her; all she  
could do was to let him have one swift  
glance from her downcast eyes, which was  
all the answer he needed."

"Well, you know, Mrs. Hemphill, Mar-  
thy feels as if the children h'es as good a  
right as herself to the farm; they was her  
father's."

"Yes; but he didn't make no will, and the  
farm and the settin' out was all Marthy's  
own mother's, so nobody can't dispute  
her claim. Besides, what does a slip  
of a girl like that know 'bout carryin' on  
a farm, I'd like to know?"

"It's too bad; but, as you say, she'll  
find how hard it is to manage a farm. I  
am greatly exercised for her, and I'll ask  
the sinterhood to make her a subject of an  
address to the throne of grace," said Mrs.  
Pringle as she gave a little sigh, and  
folded up her knitting to take her seat at  
Mr. Hemphill's tea table, for she had  
ridden over to spend the afternoon and  
have a good visit.

Jabez, Mrs. Hemphill's only son, and  
his father came in and took their accus-  
tomed places, and the father asked a word  
of blessing, and reached his hand out and  
caught a biscuit at the same moment that  
he delivered his "amen."

Jabez was a handsome, frank young  
fellow, who worked very hard and was a  
man of many virtues.

He found time, somehow, after the mul-  
titudinous duties on a farm were done,  
to study, and to slip over to the Avery  
farm very often.

Being a steady and handsome young  
fellow, his mother naturally looked on  
him with pride, and now she felt that  
she was doing her duty as a wise mother  
in discomfiting such a foolish action on  
Marthy's part as adopting her three little  
half sisters and baby brother.

wiped away her tears, and sun-  
curly tendrils of her hair; and  
knew it his strong arm was a  
waist and he had kissed her.

In a few minutes she was  
calm, but her dignity had  
was only a weak woman at  
was striving to do her plain  
tried to free herself from the st.  
arms that held her in so close an  
forting a clasp; for, poor child, I  
was only a week dead!

"Don't, Jabez," was all she co.  
"And why not, Marthy? Why a  
not love—"

"Oh, dear!" said Marthy, despairing.  
"Oh, dear! Oh, Jabez, please don't, for  
this is not possible."

"And why not, Marthy? Ever since we  
were able to talk I have known you and  
loved you; and all my life I have been  
trying to deserve you. You have loved  
me, too, haven't you? Well, then, why  
isn't it possible, please tell me?"

"Haven't you heard? Don't you know?  
Jabez, I feel as if it is my solemn duty to  
take care of these poor little children, and  
not let them suffer. Father left nothing  
but the farm; but there was always  
enough for us all, and I must try to do  
the best I can for them. And your—you  
—I think I better not see each other  
any more, for—"

"There, that's just enough. You are  
willing to throw off for the sake of  
those children who have no earthly claim  
upon you. You could send them to their  
poor old grandfather, but you prefer to  
shoulder the burden yourself, and destroy  
all your dreams of happiness, and devote  
your life to them, and forget the life  
long love I had for you?"

"It is my duty, Jabez."

"And you are willing to sacrifice all to  
them, and they may turn out ungrateful  
or wicked; and you know me, and that I  
love you dearly, little Marthy, and always  
will."

"I can't help it, Jabez. I can't see it  
in the same light. I feel as if the hand of  
the dead lay upon me, and I must obey.  
Besides, I do it because I feel it is right.  
Don't make it harder for me than it is,  
Jabez."

"Marthy, my little wife."

"I would be very happy so, Jabez; but  
I know your mother never would con-  
sent, and I couldn't bear to cause a dis-  
agreement in your family."

"I can manage that, Marthy, if you will  
agree to be my wife next Monday. We  
will go over to Wilkesbarre to get married;  
there quietly, and return and settle down  
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At 21 Canterbury Street, corner Church.