

THE SHADOW.

In a bleak land and desolate.
Beyond the earth somewhere.
Went wandering through Death's dark gate,
A soul into the air.

And still, as on and on it fled.
A waste, wild region through,
Behind there fell the steady tread
Of one that did pursue.

At last it paused, and looked about.
And then it was aware
A hideous wretch stood in its track.
Deformed and cowering there.

"And who art thou?" she shrieked, with fright.
That thou dost my steps pursue?
Go hide thy shapeless shape from sight.
Nor thus pollute my view!

The foul form answered him: "Always
Along thy path I flee.
I'm thine own actions. Night and day
Still must I follow thee!"

CINDERELLA.

Revelwood Junction was an out-of-the-way place some distance inland. The station boasted but one waiting-room, the dingy aspect of which was partially concealed by the dust thickly encrusted on the small window-panes. The wooden benches were innocent of backs or cushions, and the floor looked as if it had never been scoured. A child dressed in shabby black garments was its sole occupant. She was seated behind the door, intently reading, with a good-sized carpet-bag beside her. The brim of her black straw hat almost touched her back, in which she was too deeply interested to heed the trains which passed noisily outside, or even one which stopped, and from which several passengers alighted.

There was considerable bustle as the porters deposited the luggage on the platform, while from one of the first-class carriages a pale, fair-haired youth was assisted to descend. It was a work of pain and difficulty, although he was almost carried by his companion, a tall man in a gray travelling suit, whose resolute features wore an expression of anxious solicitude as he assisted the invalid into the waiting-room. Then the porter entered with rugs and shawls, which were spread upon the hard bench for the youth to recline upon.

"There—now you are more comfortable," said the man in the gray suit, when this was accomplished. "We shall have to wait here some hours—I wish you had allowed me to telegraph for a special. You can have a special every day if you like, dear old boy—you haven't realized your position yet, nor what an important member of society you have become."

"Hardly yet," was the reply to the half-jesting words. "When is the next train?"

"At eight. You'll be awfully tired, old fellow; you had no business to travel to-day, and I was an ass to let you do it."

"Nonsense, Bertie; you know I would have come."

"I wish we had something higher for you to rest against."

As he spoke, he looked hopelessly round the room, and spied the little figure behind the door. Her soft dark eyes were watching him. As soon as he stopped speaking, she advanced shyly.

"If you don't mind having it," she said, in a timid, hesitating tone, "I think my bag would make a nice pillow."

"Thanks—just the thing!" he said, springing up. "Do you stay here long?"

"My train comes in a few minutes before eight o'clock," she answered.

"I am much obliged to you," said the invalid, as the little maiden stood near, anxiously regarding him.

She glanced shyly from under her dark lashes, smiled, and then returned quietly to her seat. "I say, Lyon, shall you mind if I go away for a short time?"

"Not at all."

"I want to find something for you—for us, I mean, to eat. You are sure you won't mind?"

"No, certainly not; I shall manage all right."

"Well, I shan't be long—good-bye for the present."

He had been gone about ten minutes, when the girl, looking up, saw the young man endeavoring to reach a paper on the table. Running across, she placed it in his hands, and took up a position close by.

"Thank you. It is a shame to disturb you when you are so interested in that pretty book. May I ask what it is?"

"It is the story of Cinderella. Have you read it?"

"Yes, a long time ago. I am afraid I have forgotten it now."

"I could never forget it. But perhaps you have many books, and can read when you like. I have lessons to do; I can read very seldom"—looking up wistfully.

"You are small to study so hard," he remarked.

"I am past fourteen," answered the little lady, gravely.

"Fourteen! You are a little thing for fourteen! I thought you were about twelve," said the young man, surprised.

She did not look over-pleased, so he discreetly changed the subject.

"When I enter Parliament, I shall make a law that little girls shall do lessons only when they like."

"I wish you were in Parliament now"—with a sigh.

"So do I, by George!" he muttered, disconsolately, adding, "Should you like to be that personage—Cinderella?"

"Oh, yes!" she answered, laughing gayly. "How nice it would be to have a fairy god-mother, and go to a real ball, and dance with a prince! But I don't know any princes"—snaking her head—"so it could never happen."

"We don't know that. Didn't Cinderella have rather hard lines before the godmother arrived?"

"Yes, she was very unhappy."

"Then you are Cinderella now; and I shall call you so. Can you guess mine?"

"I think so," she answered. "It is Mr. Lyon."

"Exactly—it is Mr. Lyon," he said, laughing.

"Well, Mr. Lyon, how are you?" cried a voice in the door-way.

"Bertie! Back so soon?"

"I don't know what you call soon," returned the other, putting a bottle of wine on the table. "I have been away more than an hour. Not a shop could I find, and I positively came to the conclusion that the inhabitants subsisted on grass and gravel. Three hours more! How shall we get through them?" he added, hiding a yawn.

"What do little girls do when they are dull, Cinderella?"

"I don't know," she answered, doubtfully.

"I think they tell each other stories."

"Suppose you tell us one," he suggested.

"If I tell you a story will you tell me one in return?" she asked, appealing to Bertie.

"That's only fair," he answered. "It's a bargain."

With many comical interruptions from the young men which made them all laugh, she managed to tell her story, and then promptly demanded one in return. Bertie looked puzzled. The promise was a rash one, for stories were clearly not in his line.

"I don't know any fairy tales," he said, at length. "Will any other kind do, Cinderella?"

"Yes," she replied, "I love to hear of noble deeds and brave men."

"Then I can tell you one story—a true one," he said, with a change of tone which made her look into his face wonderingly. "I suppose I must begin with the orthodox 'Once upon a time'; so here goes."

"Once upon a time there were two brothers, or, to be more exact, half-brothers, who lived with their widowed mother in a small sea-coast town in Normandy. One brother was considerably older than the other; he was also his mother's favorite, and contrived to have things pretty much his own way. He chose to become a soldier, and, upon joining his regiment, his mother made over to him nearly all the small income she possessed. The younger brother obtained employment as a clerk, and on his slender salary he and his mother contrived to live. This state of things continued until the elder was summoned home by the tidings of his mother's illness. Stories of his gay, reckless life had reached her ears, and anxiety, combined with privation, had brought her to the brink of the grave. His mother recovered; but, from various causes, a coldness sprang up between the brothers. The younger warmly remonstrated with the other concerning his selfish folly. The idea of his younger brother, whose opinion he held in contempt, tutoring him with regard to his duty fired his indignation; the result was a quarrel more serious than they had ever had before."

"It was at this juncture that the younger brother received intelligence of his uncle's death and his own accession to a noble title and vast fortune. I am ashamed to say that the tidings increased every feeling of animosity and anger in the elder's heart. He left the house in a fit of passion, and swore never again to speak to his brother. The younger one knew well that the pride, which had always been his brother's bane, would forever prevent his seeking reconciliation now; so, like the foolish, generous fellow that he was, he resolved to leave no means untried to effect one. He followed him to the beach, and learned there that he had gone out with a fisherman in a small boat, intending to sail round the point."

"The wind was rising, and the sky looked threatening. He perceived little groups of fishermen looking seaward, and questioning each other as to who were out in the boats. After wandering anxiously up and down the beach for some time, he perceived a boat making its way to the shore. In it was the fisherman whom his brother had sailed with that afternoon. The fisherman informed him that the boat had been upset near the point, and the young gentleman dashed against the rocks and severely cut; but he had managed to clamber upon a projecting ledge, and had bidden him—Joe—hasten to the shore for assistance."

"Lyon delayed not a moment. Having provided himself with a thick coil of rope, he and the fisherman rowed across the now stormy sea. The point was a sharp rock rising from the water, surrounded by numerous low crags, most of which were covered when the tide was high. Under the most favorable auspices it was impossible for a boat to go very near, for the channels were too narrow to admit its ingress. As soon as they approached close enough, Lyon fastened the rope round his waist and swam toward the point. It was the act of a madman. Twenty times he was dashed against the sharp crags,

which lacerated his limbs; but he struggled on. A vivid flash of lightning showed him his brother's form extended motionless on a projecting ledge. Clambering up the steep side, he discovered that he had fainted from loss of blood. He looked about for some projection to which he might fasten the rope that he carried, but found none. The ledge he stood on had no projecting angles, and the rock behind rose up almost perpendicularly. He signalled to Joe to come to his assistance. This the fisherman accomplished with the help of the rope, having anchored the boat between two crags.

"You must get him home immediately, Joe," he said, as the man reached the ledge. "He is bleeding to death fast. Don't delay, man, for heaven's sake!"

"No, no," replied the young man. "I could not swim that again to-night. I have given my leg an awkward twist. Leave me here; you can return when the gale is over."

"Delay was useless; their only chance lay in the lull lasting long enough for Joe to gain the boat. He took the half-unconscious man, while Lyon held the rope, and managed to reach the boat in safety."

"As the fisherman had predicted, the storm increased in fury. No boat could be put out that night, nor a greater part of the next day. When at last a rescue party reached the point, they found the poor young fellow, as they thought, dead. He was not dead—thank heaven—"

Here the young man's voice faltered, and he stopped abruptly.

"It was you?" cried the girl, looking at Lyon with eyes overflowing with tears. "How brave you were!"

"I could tell you that story differently, Cinderella," Lyon answered, "and show you how greatly he has transcended a noble nature."

She hardly listened to his words. Laying her hand upon his arm, she said softly—

"I shall always love to think of that story—I shall never forget it." At that moment her train came hissing in, and she held out her hand. "Good-bye, Mr. Lyon; I hope you will soon be quite well."

In another moment the train was gone. The young men's followed almost immediately; and it was not until they were fairly on their journey that they recollected that the carpet-bag the girl had lent them had been forgotten. She had gone away without it, and the porter had placed it in the carriage with their luggage. As it had no address, and was secured only by a strap, they opened it, to ascertain, if possible, the owner's name. A shabby black dress, a pair of worn little slippers, a pair of soiled gloves, and a change of linen much the worse for wear—that was all it contained. There was no name, no address of any kind.

Poor little Cinderella!

The Wynnes belonged to that unhappy class of society whose means are inadequate to their pretensions. Colonel Wynne was a good kind-hearted man, whose greatest fault was that he allowed himself to be ruled by his wife against his better judgment. The old man was miserable beneath the load of his sham magnificence, for he saw the shadow of debt growing darker as the months passed on, while he had yet lacked resolution to put an end to so unpleasant a state of affairs.

There were points on which his wife had been forced to yield; and one of these was the adoption of his orphan niece Dolores, the only child of his brother Arthur, who had died in Belgium rather more than two years before. The Colonel resolved that Dolores should come, and held his ground against all arguments, and even taunts, as to the extra expense the step would entail, which his wife brought to bear upon the question. The Colonel for once stoutly maintained his position. Dolores was young, he said, and her dress at least need not be expensive. Her cousins' clothes would do for her, with alterations, as well as other things they did not need. So, with such an understanding, Dolores came. Her tall consins' old dresses were shortened for her, and their half-worn boots, with a good piece of wadding stuffed into the toes, did duty on her feet. The gloves were almost impracticable, and the long fingers a real trial; but even this was overcome by dint of sundry clever contrivances. Fortunately Dolores' wardrobe did not constitute her chief happiness. With a story-book in her hand, and seated on her favorite old sofa in the schoolroom, she could defy all the loose boots and long-fingered gloves in the world; or she could trail her shabby robes across the schoolroom boards, and with imagination's magic wand transform them into richest velvet decked with the jewels of Aladdin's cave.

The Colonel smoked his pipe here in the evenings, and chatted with Dolores. She never tired of his stories, and loved to fill his pipe with her deft little fingers. She too had her little histories to relate of the time when she and her father had lived in Belgium. She told him how very poor they were, and how glad she was when she learned to make lace, as it enabled her to procure many comforts for her father. To all of which the Colonel listened with never-failing interest, nodding his approval between the puffs of smoke.

"Could you earn much, Dolly?" he asked, when the recital was finished.

"Not much—only a few pence every day; but it was something."

The drawing-room was a large, well-furnished apartment, or rather had been well furnished, for the furniture was worn in many places, and although the rents and frays in the handsome

brocade were skillfully concealed, it was evident to a casual observer that it had seen its best days. Near to a window which commanded a good view of the street a young lady was seated, working at an embroidery frame. She was richly dressed in dark silk, and wore a handsome chain round her neck; her golden hair was arranged in close plaits round her small, well-shaped head.

As a carriage drove up and a knock resounded through the house, she rose and went to the window, displaying in the movement a tall, well-formed figure and graceful bearing, which, together with her fine though somewhat haughty features, betrayed unmistakably the aristocrat. She was Colonel Wynne's eldest daughter. The footman entered and announced Mrs. Featherstone. Miss Wynne greeted her visitor cordially.

"How good of you to come to me so early! I am all alone. Mamma and Annie have gone out shopping. I detest shopping, and declined to accompany them."

"I am fortunate in finding you at home," answered Mrs. Featherstone, in a languid voice, opening her fan; "I am going into the country, to Casterton, on Saturday."

"So soon!" cried Miss Wynne, surprised. "I thought it was quite settled you were to leave next week?"

"So it was; but my brother writes to say I must be there sooner. Men are so wretchedly helpless, my dear, when there is anything on hand; and these races always entail a round of gayety. I have come to-day to beg a great favor of Dolores, my dear Matilda. I tore that lace shawl of mine yesterday, and I positively don't know how to get it repaired by Saturday. I am in a state of absolute despair, for I set my heart on wearing it at the races. I am really ashamed to ask; but do you think that Dolores would mind doing it for me? She repaired your mother's so cleverly, much better than these professional menders."

"She can do it quite well," said Matilda Wynne; "but she is not always obliging. You can ask her, however"—ringing as she spoke. "Send Miss Dolores here," she said to the servant who entered.

In a few minutes the door opened, and a slight figure dressed in black appeared on the threshold. It was that of the girl who, two years before, had waited so long in the company of two young men at Revelwood Junction. In some respects her face was much altered; the happy childish expression was gone, giving place to a shrinking hesitation; but the large brown eyes were soft and gentle as ever. She was very fair to look upon, but a subtle change had passed over her; she was no longer a child. She came forward, a nervous embarrassment in her manner, as though uncertain of her reception. In her timid greeting a degree of awkwardness was also manifest.

"Mrs. Featherstone wishes you to mend a lace shawl for her," said her cousin. "Could you do it this week?"

"Is it much torn?" she asked, timidly.

"Will you kindly ring, Matilda? I brought it with me in the carriage, in order to loose no time."

The shawl was brought in and a formidable rent displayed. Dolores looked at it in dismay.

"It will take a long time to do; the lace is very fine."

"My dear child, I must positively have it by Friday, for I am going into the country on Saturday. You will do it, like a dear, good girl, won't you?"

"Indeed—indeed I can't," said Dolores, hurriedly, almost tearfully, as she remembered her uncle's promise to take her to Epsom. "No one could, unless they worked from morning to night."

"I am sorry to have troubled you then," said Mrs. Featherstone, stilly. "I had no idea you would have found it so troublesome a task."

Matilda Wynne looked extremely annoyed, and remarked that Dolores could always find time for reading, and that it was only when she was required to do a kind action that time was her excuse.

"If you had ever made lace so fine as that, you would know how long it takes," said Dolores, her eyes filling with tears.

"I know nothing of lace-making, it is true," said Mrs. Featherstone, with an offended air, rising as she spoke, "and therefore am no judge of the time it takes to repair a comparatively small rent."

She was not a bad hearted woman, but her disappointment inclined her to be unjust.

As soon as the door closed behind her, Matilda Wynne's anger broke out.

"I never knew any one so ill-natured; I believe you do these things on purpose, Dolores."

"What things?" asked Dolores, bewildered by her cousin's anger.

"What things?" repeated Matilda, scornfully. "As though you did not understand. How can you pretend ignorance, when you know perfectly well that Annie and I are dying to go to the Casterton ball, and that we depended on Mrs. Featherstone for our invitations? She is too angry now, thanks to you, to take any trouble about it."

"I did not know," Dolores answered, indignantly. "You never told me."

"You did know," rejoined the other, angrily.

"And it all comes to this—if you don't do that horrid shawl, we shan't go to Casterton," and Matilda Wynne left the room abruptly.

Dolores was hurt and angry at her cousin's injustice, and little disposed to give up the happy visit she had looked forward to so long. There was a struggle in her mind, which lasted, how-