

OVER THE SNOW.

Oh, William, poet-king, own you were wrong  
Where boldly you uttered your dictum in song,  
That May and the spring days owned love in its  
prime!

When the passion scorns fetters of season or time.  
I saw her—I loved her, and how could I fail,  
Though Christmas was blowing its bitterest gale,  
Though snow-flakes in silver were falling around,  
And frost at its keenest had fettered the ground?  
All ruffled and hunger-tamed feathered fowl fled  
But a few yards in flight at the snow-muffled tread;  
And 'twas so with fair Lillian, storm-ruffled bird,  
When there by the hill-side my step she first heard:  
All startled and eager, o'er-burdened she stood,  
As I leaped into view from the edge of the wood;  
The wind tried to waft her, the snow-flakes to hide,  
Each aiding the evergreens clasped to her side.  
And love? What, in winter, the landscape all bare?  
Yes, I wooed and I won, for I vow I was there.

I'd arrived down from town, but was left in the  
lurch,  
At the house—"No, sir, out—evergreens—deck the  
church."

I stopped for no more, for my heart knew no rest,  
And away o'er the crunching snow started in quest.  
How the spirits of air seemed to mock at my pain,  
When now here and now there I'd each smarting eye  
strain!

But no—nought but snow-flake and snow-laden  
bough,  
And the wind through the pines in a low meaning  
sough;  
But I searched on and searched with my heart in a  
glow,  
Till I met with a tiny track over the snow.

Pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, my poor heart and each trace—  
The former all flurry, the latter all grace—  
And I knew by the footprints my darling had made,  
I was right on the trail, though the storm sprites be-  
trayed.

And now in mad anger they leapt to the fray:  
With a rush and a sweep came each evergreen  
spray,  
To sweep the snow surface and bare the soft track,  
Till the gravel lay snow-swept, the soft furrows  
black.

But onward, still onward! the footprints ahead,  
When the snow came in whirl-drifts to cover the  
tread,  
They were there though, still there, 'neath the wide-  
spreading fir:

But now the harsh briar hand dared me to stir,  
As it caught at each garment; the storm, too, came  
down

To beat me away with its mightiest frown.  
But love laughed at rivals, I knew she was there,  
And flung down my gage to the spirits of air,  
As I dashed on through snow, rime, through coppice  
and wood.

To where all leaf-laden my startled fawn stood—  
Stood at gaze—for a moment as white as the snow,  
Then her cheeks bid to rival each berry's red glow,  
And her parted lips' pearls shone in mistletoe sheen.  
While she clasped in her arms her vast bouquet of  
green.

Enemies all, from the laurel that lay  
On the soft heaving breast, with the cedar and bay,  
And a *chêne de France* of the holly—all arms,  
To not as a fortress for Lillian's charms;  
And I said, could I laurel or bay leaf have been!  
When my heart said, "My lad, you're sufficiently  
green."

Well, I loved, and she knew,—there was welcome  
that day;  
It was Christmas—the rest is to come off in May.

THE NEW CLERK.

Jenkins met Smith, his senior partner, at the  
depot, who had been absent on a tour.

"How's business?" inquired the latter.

"All right, got a new clerk."

"Got a new clerk, eh? Where is Jones?"

"Discharged him. An idle, extravagant  
young dog!"

"True enough, and the new one won't do any  
better. Drinking, gambling, late hours, fast  
horses—that's the way with them all."

And Smith groaned.

Jenkins' eye twinkled. He well knew the  
peculiarities of his good-hearted but eccentric  
bachelor partner.

"Well, the new clerk don't drink nor gamble,  
I'm certain of that, and has thus far been very  
attentive and industrious."

"Thus far? Oh, yes. Wait a month. New  
brooms sweep clean."

"Oh, well, if the new clerk don't suit you,  
you can send the clerk adrift, that's all. I took  
her—a'm—the new clerk on trial."

Mr. Smith stared at his partner.

"I suppose the new clerk has a name," he  
remarked, dryly.

"Oh, yes. Her—that is to say—the new clerk's  
name is Gardner. But here we are."

As was his usual custom, Mr. Smith went  
through the store, past the array of clerks on  
either side of the counter, without glancing  
either to the right or left. But when he reached  
his private office, at the farther end, he looked  
through the glass door, which was so situated  
that he could see all that was going on in the  
store.

As his eyes fell upon the occupant of a desk  
near the door, he started.

"What's that?" he said, turning sharply to  
his partner, who had followed him.

Jenkins gazed composedly at the slender  
form, whose graceful head was bent intently  
upon a ledger that lay upon the desk.

"That? Why, that's the new clerk."

Smith rubbed his eyes and looked again.

"Why, it's a woman!" he exclaimed, with  
an air of incredulity and horror.

"I should say it was," said Jenkins, coolly,  
"and a confoundedly pretty one at that."

Smith gave his partner a look of virtuous in-  
dignation.

"Mr. Jenkins, this is no place for a woman."  
"Think not? Now it strikes me she fits the  
place very nicely."

"The proper place for a woman is the sanc-  
tuary of home."

This was a pet observation of Mr. Smith,  
which he had read somewhere, and which he  
considered a clincher in such an argument.

"But suppose she hasn't any?"

This was a poser, and in his efforts to sur-  
mount it, Mr. Smith got excited.

"Hasn't any? Why, sir, she must—she  
ought to have one."

"Very true. In fact, so confident am I on  
this point, that I have thought of offering her  
mine—or, at least, to share it with her."

"Mr. Jenkins, this is not a fit subject for  
jest."

"It's a serious matter, I know; so on the  
whole, perhaps I had better think it over awhile  
longer. Besides, there is no knowing if she  
would accept my offer, together with the incum-  
brance that goes with it."

"Jenkins," returned Smith, severely, "will

site the desk where she sat, and he passed by,  
glancing sidewise at the unconscious occupant,  
who did not lift her head as he approached.

After speaking to a clerk in the farther end  
of the room, he walked slowly back to where  
the young lady sat, and who, as he passed,  
raised a pair of soft blue eyes, shooting a be-  
wildering glance in Smith's, that he felt to the  
toe of his boot.

"Miss—Miss—" he stammered.

"My name is Georgiana," said the young  
lady, smiling. "Some call me George for  
short."

"Well, Miss George—Georgiana, I am afraid  
you will find your situation rather unpleas-  
ant."

"Not at all, sir. On the contrary, I find it  
very pleasant and comfortable."

"Ahem—but I fear you will hardly be equal  
to the discharge of its duty."

"I hope not. If you will run your eye over

met his partner's inquiring eye, but with an  
inward consciousness that he had been com-  
pletely routed by the enemy.

"Going?" said Jenkins, with nonchalance  
most provoking.

"Well, no, not to-day. What the deuce are  
you grinning at?"

"Oh, nothing—nothing at all," responded  
Jenkins, throwing himself back in his chair, and  
regarding intently a fly on the ceiling.

"What I was going to remark was," resumed  
Smith, with quite an unnecessary assumption  
of dignity, "that I have concluded to allow the  
young girl to remain until I can find some situ-  
ation for her more in accordance with her sex."

"Very kind and considerate of you," said  
Jenkins dryly, "especially taking into consid-  
eration that she does her work better than  
any clerk we ever had, and less pay, too."

Smith was by no means the ogre he seemed.  
Aside from his prejudices he was a sensible,  
kind-hearted man. Georgiana was not called  
upon to open the store or run errands, though  
she offered to do both. Curious to relate, as  
days and weeks passed, Smith's repugnance to  
her presence not only vanished with them, but  
he began to regard her with positive pleasure.

He used to often look through the glass door,  
watching the graceful poise of the head and the  
motion of the deft little fingers as they glided  
over the paper, until at last curious fancies  
seemed to creep into his brain, and he began to  
indulge in glowing dreams of how wonderfully  
such a little woman as that would brighten up  
his lonely and cheerless home.

But he determined to proceed cautiously. He  
had it. His housekeeper was about to leave;  
he would offer Miss Gardner the situation—and  
then.

Having formed this resolution, his next step  
was to request the young lady's presence in his  
private office, a summons that was promptly  
obeyed.

"Miss Gardner, don't you think the situation  
of housekeeping in a quiet home, like mine,  
for instance, would be preferable to your situ-  
ation here?"

"Perhaps, in some respects, it might," said  
Georgiana, coloring at this abrupt inquiry, and  
the look which accompanied it.

Was the old gentleman about to make her  
an offer?

But his next words relieved her of this appre-  
hension.

"My housekeeper is about to leave me, and I  
should be glad to have you supply her place."

Georgiana's face grew very red, and her mouth  
dimpled with the smiles that she strove vainly  
to suppress.

"You are very kind, sir, but the fact is Mr.  
Jenkins has spoken to me first."

"Mr. Jenkins?"

"Yes sir. He asked me to be his house-  
keeper, and I said I would."

"But my child, Mr. Jenkins is a young man—  
it would not be proper for you to keep house  
for him. Now with me it is different."

And Georgiana inwardly agreed with him. In  
fact, there was all the difference in the world for  
her.

"But he asked me to be his wife as well as  
housekeeper."

"O-o-o-h!"

Smith's first feeling was that of intense as-  
tonishment, his next of quite as strong chagrin.  
But it all ended in an emotion of thankfulness  
that he had not committed himself.

His disappointment, however, could not have  
ranked very deeply, for he attended the wed-  
ding with smiling tranquillity, the ceremony  
that transformed his new clerk into the happy  
wife of his fortunate partner, Jenkins.



"STOOD AT GAZE—"

you cease trifling and attend to the business in  
hand? This woman must go."

"Very well; you told me you wanted a clerk  
who was faithful and industrious, that didn't  
spend his salary, and all he could steal, on fast  
horses and the like, and I got you one. It's an  
easy matter to send her off."

"Of course it is," rejoined Smith, brightening  
at the suggestion. "Just tell her she does not  
exactly suit, and that we shan't need her after  
to-day."

"But she does suit me; and if you are not  
satisfied, all you have got to do is to tell her  
so."

"You hired her."

"And for that reason I won't discharge her  
without some good cause."

"No matter," returned Smith indifferently;  
"I can discharge her. I think I am equal to  
that much."

Jenkins, who had left the room, put his head  
back a minute later.

"Bet you a hundred dollars you don't do  
it."

With this parting shot he disappeared.

Now Smith had a nervous horror of women—  
as his partner well knew, especially young  
women—and never spoke to one if he could  
help it.

Had it been a man he would have known  
what to say, and experienced no difficulty in  
saying it, but a woman was quite another  
thing.

But his partner's words had touched his pride,  
and, summoning all his resolution, he walked  
in.

But his courage failed him as he came oppo-

the balance-sheet you will find everything  
correct."

With a desperate hope that there would be  
something amiss, Smith did so, but was dis-  
appointed.

"I hope you have no fault to find?" said the  
clerk, rather anxiously, on perceiving that he  
hesitated.

"You are a woman—"

Here, whether abashed by a sudden display  
of dimples on the pink cheeks, that grew more  
pink at this rather unnecessary assertion,  
Smith came to an abrupt pause.

At this the smiling face settled into an ex-  
pression of demure gravity.

"I must plead guilty to the charge of being a  
woman. But though it may be a misfortune, it  
can scarcely be called a fault; at any rate it is  
one for which I am not answerable."

"You misunderstand me, ma'am. What I  
meant to say was, that there are certain duties  
connected with your office, such as opening the  
store, going to the post-office, etc., which you  
cannot very well perform."

"I assure you, sir, that I like nothing better  
than an occasional walk in the open air. And  
as to opening the store, and sweeping and dust-  
ing, I don't know why it should be harder to  
perform that office for a store than for a house.  
I claim no consideration for my sex," resumed  
the young lady, casting a reproachful glance at  
the perplexed countenance of her employer,  
but I ask in common justice, that you will not  
discharge me simply because I am a woman."

Muttering a disclaimer of some kind, he  
hardly knew what, Smith beat a sudden retreat  
to his own room, assuming a bold front as he

A new process for the instantaneous extinc-  
tion of a conflagration is said to have been re-  
cently experimented with at Paris, and with  
entire success. M. de la Vieille Montagne, chem-  
ical manufacturer, of Amiens, has, it appears,  
discovered a resinous substance which is  
quickly soluble in fresh water. Such a solution,  
employed for the service of the ordinary fire-  
engines, is stated to produce the following  
effects:—The water is prevented from conver-  
sion into steam by the heat, and thus effectually  
penetrates and wets the bodies on which it  
falls, avoiding all the ordinary phenomena of  
calcification in similar cases, by which the action  
of pure water is so notably neutralized. More-  
over, the resinous matter would appear to give  
rise to dense volumes of smoke, unfavourable  
to flames and combustion, or even ignition.

The number of book-sellers in France and her  
dependencies is returned at 5,674; that of print-  
ing offices, at 1,399; and that of lithographic  
establishments, at 1,624. About one-fifth of the  
first-class, one-eighth of the second, and one-  
fourth of the third are in Paris. There are  
2,808 periodicals, of which 846 are in Paris.

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