

MATT.

A TALE OF A CARAVAN.

(Continued.)

"She shook her head.

"It's fifteen year come Withsundaytide," she explained, "since I come ashore."

"Although I was not a little curious to know what this 'coming ashore' meant, I felt that all my conversation had been categorical to monotony, and I determined, therefore, to reserve further inquiry until another occasion. Observing that my new friend was now looking at the caravan with considerable interest, I asked her if she knew what it was, and if she had ever seen anything like it before. She replied in the negative, though I think she had a tolerably good guess as to the caravan's uses. I thought this a good opportunity to show my natural politeness. Would she like to look at the interior? She said she would, though without exhibiting much enthusiasm.

"I thereupon led the way up the steps and into the vehicle. Matt followed; but, so soon as she caught a glimpse of the interior, stood timidly on the threshold. What is there in the atmosphere of a house, even the rudest, which places the visitor at a disadvantage as compared with the owner? Even animals feel this, and dogs especially, when visiting strange premises, exhibit most abject humility. But I must not generalize. The bearings of this remark, to quote my friend Captain Cuttle, lie in the application of it. Matt for a moment was awed.

"Come in, Matt; come in," I said.

"She came in by slow degrees; and I noticed for the first time—seeing how near her hat was to the roof—that she was unusually tall. I then did the honors of the place; showed her my sleeping arrangement, my culinary implements, everything that I thought would interest her. I offered her the army-chair, or turned-up bedstead; but she preferred a stool which I sometimes used for my feet, and, sitting down upon it, looked around her with obvious admiration.

"Should you like to live in a house like this?" I asked, encouragingly.

"She shook her head with decision.

"Why not?" I demanded.

"She did not exactly know why, or at any rate, could not explain. Wishing to interest and amuse her, I handed her a portfolio of my sketches, chiefly in water colors. Her manner changed at once, and she turned them over with little cries of delight. It was clear that Matt had a taste for the beautiful in art, but her chief attraction was for pictures representing the human face or figure.

"Among the sketches she found a crayon drawing of an antique and blue-eyed gentleman in a skull cap, copied from some Rembrandtish picture I had seen abroad.

"I know who this is!" she exclaimed. "It's William Jones' father."

"I assured her on my honor that William Jones' father was not personally known to me, but she seemed a little incredulous. Presently she rose to go.

"I can't stop no longer," she explained, "I've got to go up to Monkshurst for William Jones."

"Monkshurst? Is that where the polite Mr. Monk resides?"

"Yes; up in the wood," she replied with a grimace expressive of no little dislike.

"Is Mr. Monk a friend of yours?"

"Her answer was a very decided negative. Then, slouching to the door, she swung herself down to the ground. I followed and stood on the threshold, looking down on her.

"Don't forget that I'm to paint your picture," I said. "When will you come back?"

"To-morrow, maybe."

"I shall expect you. Good-bye!"

"Good bye, master," she returned, reaching up to shake hands.

"I watched her as she walked away towards the road, and noticed that she took bold strides like a boy. On reaching the road she looked back and laughed, then she drew herself together and began running like a young deer, with little or nothing of her former clumsiness, until she disappeared among the sand hills.

"Thursday.—This morning, just after breakfast, when I entered the caravan to prepare my materials for the Jay's painting, Tim appeared at the door with a horrid grin.

"There's a young lady asking for ye," he said.

"I had forgotten for the moment my appointment of the day before, and when I leaped from the caravan, I perceived, standing close by, with her back to me and her face toward the lake, the figure of a young woman. At first I failed to identify her, for she wore a black hat and white feather, a cloth jacket and a dress which almost reached the ground, but she turned round as I approached her and I recognized my new acquaintance.

"I cannot say that she was improved by her change of costume. In the first place it made her look several years older—in fact quite young-womanly. In the second place, it was tawdry, not to say servant-gally, if I may coin such an adjective. The dress was of thin silk, old and frayed,

and looked as if it had suffered a good deal from exposure to the elements, as was indeed the actual case. The jacket was also old, and seemed made of the rough material which is usually cut into sailors' pea-jackets, which was the case, also. The hat was obviously new, but just as obviously home-made.

"So you have come," I said, shaking hands. "Upon my word, I didn't know you."

"She laughed delightedly, and glanced down at her attire, which clearly afforded her the greatest satisfaction.

"I put on my Sunday clothes," she explained, "'cause I was going to have my likeness took. Don't you tell William Jones."

"I promised not to betray her to that insufferable nuisance, and refrained from informing her that I thought her ordinary costume far more becoming than her seventh-day finery.

"That's a nice dress," I said, hypocritically. "Where did you buy it?"

"I didn't buy it. It come ashore."

"What! when you 'come ashore' yourself?"

"No fear!" she answered. "Last winter when the big ship went to bits out there."

"Oh, I see! Then it was a portion of a wreck?"

"Yes, it come ashore; and look ye now, this jacket come ashore, too. On a sailor chap."

"And the sailor chap made you a present of it, I suppose."

"No fear!" she repeated with her sharp shake of the head. "How could he give it to me when he was drowned and come ashore? William Jones gave it to me, and I altered it my own self—look ye now—to make it fit."

"She was certainly an extraordinary young person, and wore her mysterious finery with a coolness I thought was remarkable, it being quite clear, from her explanation, that all were fish that came to her net, or, in other words, that dead men's clothes were as acceptable to her unprejudiced taste as any others. However, the time was hastening on, and I had my promise to keep. So I got my crayon materials and made Matt sit down before me on a stool, first insisting, however, that she should divest herself of her head-gear, which was an abomination, but which she discarded with extreme reluctance. Directly I began she became rigid, and fixed herself, so to speak, as people do when being photographed—her eyes glaring on vacancy, her whole face lost in self-satisfied vacuity.

"You needn't keep like that," I cried; "I want your face to have some expression. Move your head about as much as you like, laugh and talk—it will be all the better."

"Last time I was took," she replied, "the chap said I mustn't move."

"Ah! I suppose he was a travelling photographer?"

"He had a little black box, like, on legs, and a cloth on top of it, and he looked at me through a hole in the middle. Then he cried 'now,' and held up his hand for me to keep still as a mouse; then he counted fifty—and I was took."

"Ah! Indeed! Was it a good likeness?"

"Yes, master. But I looked like the black woman who came ashore last Easter was a year."

"With conversation like this we beguiled the day, while I proceeded rapidly with my drawing. At the end of a couple of hours Matt had become so fidgety that I thought it advisable to give her a rest. She sprang up, and ran over to inspect the picture. The moment her eyes fell on it she uttered a rapturous cry.

"Look ye, now, ain't it pretty? Master, am I like that?"

"I answered her that it was an excellent likeness, and not too flattering. Her face fell, however, a little as she proceeded.

"Are my cheeks as red as that, master?"

"You are red, Matt," I replied flippantly; "so are the roses."

"She looked at me thoughtfully.

"When it's finished, will you give it to me to keep?"

"Well, we shall see."

"I gave t'other chap a shilling for his frame and all, but I've got no more money," she continued, with an insinuating smile, which, as a man of gallantry, I could not resist. So I promised that, if she behaved herself properly, I would in all probability make her the present she coveted.

"You must come again to-morrow," I said, as we shook hands, "and I'll finish the thing off."

"All right, master, I'll come."

"And, with a nod and a bright smile, she walked away.

"During the whole of the interview Tim had not been unobservant, and so soon as I was left alone he looked up from the work he was engaged upon, viz., potato-washing, and gave a knowing smile.

"Sure she's a fine bold colleen," he said. "Does your honor know who she is?"

"I have not the slightest idea."

"They're saying down baying that she's a say-fondling, and has neither father nor mother, nor any belongings."

"Pray, who was your informant?"

"The man who picked her from the say—William Jones hisself."

"That name again. It was becoming too much for flesh and blood to bear. From the first moment of my arrival I had heard no other, and I had begun to detest its very sound.

A POINT FOR YOU.

In view of what Hood's Sarsaparilla has done for others, is it not reasonable to suppose that it will be of benefit to you? For Scrofula, Salt Rheum, and all other diseases of the blood, for Dyspepsia, Indigestion, Sick Headache, Loss of Appetite, That Tired Feeling, Catarrh, Malaria, Rheumatism, Hood's Sarsaparilla is an unequalled remedy.

EHT ROF KSA

"HALIGONIAN"

RAGIC.

Made at

221 Barrington St.