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The March of the Year.

One by one, one by one,
The years march past, till the march is
done;
The old year dies to the solemn knell,
And a merry peal from the changing bell,
Users the others, one by one,
Till the march of the years shall at last
be done.

Bright and glad, dark and sad,
Are the years that come in myrtled clad,
Their faces are hidden and none can see
If merry or sorrowful each might be.
Bright and sad, dark and glad,
Have been the years that we all have
had.

Fair and subtle under the sun,
Something from us each has won,
Has it given us treasures? Day by day
It has stolen something we prized away,
We meet with fears and count with tears
The buried hopes of the long-past years.

Is it so? And yet let us not forget
How fairly the sun has risen and set;
Each year has brought us many sunny
hours,
With a wreath of flowers and a crown of
flowers,
Power in love, and time to pray,
It has given us it passed away.

We had the new that has come to view,
Work comes with it and pleasure too;
And even though it may bring some pain,
Each passing year is a thing of gain.
We greet with song the days that throng;
Do they bring us trouble? 'Twill make
us strong.

With smiles of hope and not with tears,
We meet our friends in the glad new
years;
God is with them and as they come,
They hear us nearer our restful home,
And one by one, with some treasure won
They come to our hearts till all are gone,
G. W. Munro, Agent.

The Master of the Mine.

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN.
CHAPTER XXVI.

Thus it was that poor Annie returned to her home and was received once again as a guest of the little circle at St. Gurlott's. But things were sadly changed for her, poor child, and sometimes as I watched her patient endurance my heart rose in revolt, and I blamed myself for having been the means of bringing her home again.

True, my uncle was glad to see her, and treated her with uniform kindness; indeed, he was never happy unless she was before him, and Annie noting this, was uniting in her devotion to him. But with my aunt it was another matter. She, who was usually the kindest of women, now became a domestic tyrant, and practiced toward her daughter a species of cruelty which in another person she would have been the first to denounce. She never let poor Annie rest, but reproached her unceasingly about the troubles she had brought about, the change she had brought in her poor father, and the happiness of the little home; and she never failed to remind her that it was not until she had been deserted by her unknown lover that she had decided to return and administer consolation to those whose hearts she had broken.

All this Annie bore without a murmur. "It was only her due," she said; "her mother was right; she had destroyed all their happiness, and she should be made to suffer." Nevertheless, it was hard for her to bear, and I very often saw her with traces of tears upon her cheek.

But when people have poverty before them they cannot afford to exaggerate sentimental trouble, and I soon came to the conclusion that the best way to help Annie was to help myself—to obtain a situation, if I could, and thus, by contributing a weekly allowance, to give things a better complexion at home. As all hope of obtaining employment in St. Gurlott's was out of the question, I turned my attention to other quarters. After many heart-rending disappointments and endless correspondence, I obtained a situation as overseer of a copper-mine in Devon.

The situation was a suitable one in every way, and promised to be lucrative. I was to leave home and begin operations in a fortnight.

I was in the midst of my preparations, half happy in the thought of being able to inhabit a part of the globe where my misfortunes could not find me out, when I one day heard a piece of news which killed at one blow all my hopes of the future, and made my life more Dead Sea fruit.

A report spread over the village that George Redruth was about to be married forthwith to Madeline Graham.

How or through whom the report originated, no one could tell; but it

truth was admitted on every hand. The news stunned me at first, then it drove me mad; wild, ungovernable jealousy took possession of me. I could do nothing, think of nothing now, save one thing—that the woman I loved beyond everything in this world was about to become the wife of another man, and that man my bitter enemy at heart.

It was impossible to conceal my secret any longer—they had but to look into my face and read it. When Annie heard the news, she cried bitterly, and I, blind as usual, believed she cried out of sympathy for me.

"It is a shame, Hugh!" she said, "after having made you love her, that she should write away another man."

"Don't say a word against Miss Graham," I retorted, "for she is an angel."

"Is, hold your peace!" cried my aunt. "Tis saw to us, and why should you interfere? And, after all, 'tis better as it is. She could never have wed w' Hugh; and no good comes o' young folk dandling after one another when they can never come together."

There was sound sense in my aunt's words, though at the time, with the fiercest jealousy and hatred raging in my heart against the man who had supplanted me, I could not listen to them. A few days' reflection, however, brought me to a better state of mind—showed me that I was a fool, and that the news which had wrought such an astounding effect upon me was only what I might have expected, if a wild unwarrantable passion had not made me blind. For, after all, what was I to Madeline?

During my boyhood, I had dared to love her; but when we met again, I saw distinctly that the episode which had been all in all to me had passed completely from her mind. I had had the good fortune to save her life, and she, angel that she was, had been grateful; but now the debt had been repaid—in exchange for her life, she had helped to save mine. Having paid her debt, she had removed herself irrevocably from me.

As I thought of all this, I felt my heart grow hard, and I cursed God, who, in his beneficence, had sent me this ray of blessing. But why had it come at all? Why had I been shown the light at all, if I was doomed to be cast into darkness again for the remainder of my life? With Madeline Graham by my side, I knew what my days might be; without her, I knew it would be better for me to be lying at the bottom of the sea.

I had mused thus walking up from the village one night, and now standing at the cottage gate, I looked across the marshes toward the spot where so many months ago I had brought Madeline to shore.

As I gazed, my eyes grew dim, and the impulse came upon me to revisit once again the spot where my darling had set her foot; so I struck off across the waste toward the lonely shore.

It was a fine bright moonlight night, clear and still, though the shifting clouds in the sky predicted storm. I found the sea as calm as a mill-pond, fringed with white where the edge lapped the stones upon the shore. The moon was shining radiantly upon it; also upon the boat-house, which I looked at tenderly, remembering how I had carried Madeline there. Then I fell to thinking of her. I felt again as if her head were lying on my shoulder—her cold bare arms clinging about my neck; and I felt as though I would give half my life for such an experience again.

With a heavily drawn sigh I was about to move away, when a hand was laid upon my shoulder, and turning, I found myself face to face with Madeline herself!

Yes; there she stood, looking more like a spirit than a thing of flesh and blood—her face was so white, her eyes so sad. She was wringing from head to foot in costly furs, while a black hood was thrown lightly over her head and tied under her chin.

At sight of her, all the blood rushed to my temples, and I felt my body trembling like a leaf; but I commanded myself sufficiently to speak.

"Madeline!" I said; "Miss Graham, you here at this hour?"

"Yes," she answered calmly, smiling

a little; "it is a strange place to find me, is it not? But then you know, Mr. Trelawney, I am a strange creature.... I may as well confess the truth. I followed you here to-night."

"You followed me?"

"Yes. After our dinner this evening, I came out with Anita, intending to pay you a visit at the cottage. When we came within sight of the gate, I saw you standing there. I paused a moment before stepping forward to speak to you, and you moved away, striking across the marshes toward the sea. I sent Anita back, and followed you here."

I was not altogether glad that she had done so. It was torture to be near her, to look at her, and to know that she had come straight from the embracing arms of another man. However, I commanded myself resolutely to say,

"It is not right for you to be here. Miss Graham. Will you let me take you home?"

"You shall do so presently," she answered, not looking at me, but keeping her eyes fixed upon the sea. "Now I want to talk to you. Is it true you are going away?"

"Yes; it is quite true."

"Where are you going?"

"To the borders of Devon. I have obtained a good situation, and hope to make a position there which I could never have risen to here."

"And you will be glad to go," she continued—"to leave your home?"

"Yes," I replied; "I shall be glad to go. As to my home—why, I have no home now, all is so sorely changed. My uncle is so broken, I should hardly know him; my poor cousin, with her load of sorrow, sits in the house, and shrinks from the sight of any human soul. It will be all changed for me elsewhere. Perhaps I shall find happiness. God grant it! At any rate, there will never be happiness for me here again!"

"You talk very bitterly," continued Madeline. "Then you have no wish to stay?"

"Why should I wish to stay? A few days ago it would have been another matter. It is all changed now—all changed!"

"What do you mean, Mr. Trelawney?"

"I mean," I answered, utterly losing my self-control, "that, through all these months of darkness and trouble I have been sustained by one thought, one hope. Miss Graham, we are alone together to-night; there is no one but you to hear me. I may never see you again in this world, therefore I will say it. I love you. I have loved you all my life!"

She put up her hand and said, hurriedly, "Mr. Trelawney, please say no more!"

But it was too late; I took her hand and kissed it.

"I loved you," I continued, in those far-off days when we were boy and girl together. Then years afterward the sea gave you back to my arms, and God help me the old passion was rekindled in my soul with ten times its original fire. Once again I had looked into your face, my darling, I had but one hope, one thought. I know I was a madman. I knew there was a gulf between us broader than the sea from which I snatched you, and yet, fool that I was, I lived in my paradise, and refused to see the pitfalls which were looming ahead. It was enough to know that I loved you, and that sometimes I was gladdened by a sight of your face."

I passed, and dropped her hand; she was crying.

"Miss Graham," I cried, "don't cry, for Heaven's sake! You have a right to hate me for what I have said."

She quivered slightly away her tears, and turned to me, smiling sadly.

"Don't say so, please. I honor and respect you more than I can say—more than I can confess, even to myself. I shall pray always for your welfare and happiness, and I shall never forget you as long as I live!"

"God bless you!" I murmured, kissing her hand again.

stood for a moment pondering with my eyes upon the sea.

Suddenly I said, "Miss Graham, when are you to be married?" She started, hesitated for a moment, and then replied,

"I don't quite know. I am going up to London shortly. We are to be married there."

Every word she uttered seemed to stab me to the heart. Up to this I had clung to a wild hope that the reports I had heard might have had no foundation—now that hope was gone.

"Why," I asked, desperately, "are you going to marry your cousin?"

She started again, and trembled slightly. "Why do people generally marry one another?" she answered. "Still, there is a very grave reason why this should be. My cousin is comparatively poor, while I am rich; he has grave difficulties before him which I can relieve if I am his wife."

"Did he put all this before you?"

"No; he does not even know that I am aware of it. Ah! Mr. Trelawney, we all have our troubles, and my poor aunt is breaking her heart over hers. Things have been going wrong ever since my uncle died."

"And you are to be sacrificed to save them right again?"

"Where does the sacrifice come in?"

"Did she ask you if you loved her now?"

"No! She asked me if there was anyone else whom I wished to marry, and I answered her truthfully; I said there was not."

We walked back over the marshes, Madeline leaning lightly on my arm; but we never spoke a word. Having reached the road, we walked toward Redruth House, and paused at the gate.

"Good-bye, Miss Graham!" I said, holding forth my hand, my hand.

"Good-bye!" she said.

"Yes," I returned, "I think it ought to be good-bye. In a week or ten days at most, I shall be leaving St. Gurlott's, and we may not meet again!"

Before I knew what she was doing, she had seized my hand and raised it to her lips.

"Good-bye, dear friend," she murmured, "and may God bless you!" then, with a sob, she turned and was gone.

I stood petrified, watching in a dazed kind of wonder the figure as it moved up the moonlit avenue and disappeared among the trees; then, with a sigh, I turned away. Bitterly as I had suffered through my love for Madeline, I did not for one moment wish that that episode in my life had never been.

CHAPTER XXVII.

All this time, there had been a double shadow on my life; for not only was it darkened by my unfortunate and despairing passion, but my anxiety for my uncle, I guess, of all who knew and loved him, glossed the true cause of the sorrow which made him ill.

It was too late; I took her hand and kissed it.

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us all, it might have been different; but I was utterly helpless. Combined with my great grief, came oftentimes a great dread—lest others should discover what was still an unspoken secret between my uncle and myself. So, in my despair of being of any service, I could not help counting the hours till the day came when I was to leave St. Gurlott's and repair to my new place in the adjoining county.

I was anxious, too, to get away from the district, where the engagement between Madeline Graham and George Redruth was a matter of common gossip; where I was tormented, a dozen times a day, by rumors of what was going on up at the great house. After our farewell described in the last chapter, when my last hope left me and there was nothing for it—save to resign myself to the inevitable, I saw nothing more of Madeline; but a day or two later I heard that she had gone, accompanied by Redruth and his mother, to London, and I knew, in some distant way, that the journey meant further preparations for the marriage. All this made me elude and fret like a man in chains; eager to breathe other air, and to put solid earth between himself and his sources of torment.

I had lost Madeline forever, that was clear; indeed, I had never had any hope or chance of gaining her; but the dead, cold certainty of my loss was unendurable. If I was to live on, I must exercise all the powers of my manhood, and endeavor to forget what had been, at the best, only a foolish dream. So long as I remained in the neighborhood, haunted by so many sweet memories and troublesome associations, forgetfulness was of course impossible.

The evening before the day fixed for my departure, the gloom in the little cottage was greater than ever. All our hearts were full. Although I was only going away a little distance, and although I had promised to revisit my old home whenever an opportunity offered, it seemed like parting with the old life forever. Ever since I was a boy, I had dwelt there, with those good people, who had stood to me in the place of father and mother; my little world had been St. Gurlott's, and I should have been made of hard stuff indeed, if I had failed to feel the parting.

We sat together round the fire. I tried to assume a cheerful tone, and talked hopefully of the future; but it was no use. Eager as I was to get away, I was so voluntary exile. Where I had lived so long, I would have chosen to have lived and died.

CONTINUED NEXT WEEK.