

his boasted knowledge and skill, digs and burrows slowly and painfully to follow its winding clue, and sometimes at last loses the trace and gives up in despair: but let the lightning drop from heaven, and how eagerly and delicately does it in an instant trace out and flash along each hidden link! Poetry is the lightning—the instinct of our souls—which, true to its nature, leaps with unerring certainty along the path where education and talent and science grope and grovel—always in doubt, often in despair. Heaven is all truth; and shall not the poetry infused into the soul of man find out its life, scattered throughout the wide universe—in mountains, seas and deserts, in the soft and breathing flowers and stars that mingle at dew—*eye*—and, above all, in the soul of woman—such as these!” and the impassioned speaker pressed her rosy lips as if they had been some rare and precious flower of a strange and mysterious fragrance.

“Oh, Percy—how beautiful is all this! and yet it is so strange! It makes me tremble to hear you talk in this wild way. Forgive me, love; but I am a foolish, fearful thing, and cannot follow thy bright spirit in all its wanderings. Thou soarest when thou wilt amongst the fiery stars, and leavest thy gentle Grace alone on earth. But, dearest Percy, you forget our almost hopeless situation. Without friends or money, and nothing to which we can look for even the necessities of life, I shudder to think what may become of us.”

“Do you never, Grace,” said the husband, withdrawing his arm from her waist, and placing one foot suddenly forward, on the very edge of the vessel’s deck—“when standing thus over the flashing sea, or looking from some high tower or precipice, feel an almost irresistible impulse to spring like a bird into the air—until, with a shudder, you recoil backwards, and, shutting your teeth hard, fall upon your knees and pray inwardly to be ‘delivered from temptation?’ I do; and often—nay, even now,—I hear the demon whispering, ‘plunge!’” and he drew back, as if about to leap, from an uncontrollable impulse, and that strange unearthly glare flashed in his eye.

“Percy! Percy! what would you?” exclaimed his wife, as she threw herself upon him, and, twining her arms about his neck, dragged him with an unnatural strength away from the vessel’s side. Then, bursting into tears she drooped upon his breast, murmuring, “*cruel, cruel*—thus to wring my heart in idle sport!”

“Ah, would to God it were an idle sport,

But ’tis past now. Nay, be assured—there is no danger for me; for, although I feel the impulse strong upon me, yet have I the power of soul to drive back the fiend, and to illumine his cell. Fear not, frail flower—love and beauty have sanctified me to thee, and make me bear a charmed life. But the spookiest but now of poverty and want and gradation. Idle dreams, all, sweet lady were. In the great metropolis, whither we go, intellect and genius meet a quick reward, and men are not cold and blind to all the bright and beautiful dreams of poetry and thought, as in the rude prairies of the West. The web woven by the imagination is a golden fabric, and men buy it and bow down before its possessor. Lay aside thy fears, sweetest. I am not a dull and worthless clod, to sink down and starve here in this capital of genius, wit and intellect. I’ll play my part with the best of them.—But the breeze freshens, love, and kisses thy cheeks too rudely. Leave me here to commune awhile with the burning stars, and pray for pleasant dreams to cluster round thy pillow.”

“I will not leave thee, Percy! Oh, how I shudder to recall the wild words thou utteredst but now! No, dear Percy—I am thy guardian angel, and must never leave thee, lest some ill befall thee—and then, what would be to me?”

And thus, chiding, caressing, and twining their arms together, walked these husband and wife lovers on the lonely deck, amid the beautiful and flashing sea; and, as the cold grey light of morning swallowed up the stars, and the perfume from the land forgot in sleep breathe, they heard the startling cry, “let go the anchor!” and stealing down the companion way, were lost amid the sounds of the confined cabin, ere the vessel felt her anchor and swung lazily round with the now turning tide.

For two long days must the vessel be in quarantine, in full view of the romantic hills and gardens of Staten Island; and, while all else on board were overwhelmed in the ludicrous bustle and turmoil of a debarkation, Grace and her husband sought the quarter-deck, and dwelt with rapture upon the magnificent scene as the morning burst from behind the hills and came pouring in a golden flood down to the sea. They had no friends awaiting their coming—no cheerful home and happy faces to welcome the wanderers back. But they were still, most exquisitely happy. They were drawn all to each other, and what cared they for those lesser and common-place ties, which