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THE SHAKER LOVERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS,' 'MAY MARTIN,' &c.

[CONCLUDED.]

It was no wonder, then, when all these injuries, closed as the dark catalogue was by the death of the victim, rose in review before the mind of the guilty Elder, that his conscience troubled him. He had not, it was true, really intended quite to destroy the young man's life; but he could not disguise from himself that his acts had as much produced the fatal result as if his own hand had dealt the death blow, and that, too, under feelings but little less holy than he need to have possessed to have rendered the deed the foulest in the list of human crimes In vain did he try to shut out these disquieting thoughts from his mind; in vain did he try by quibbling and sophistry to still the voice of conscience, and he soon became the prey of the most horrible fancies. He remembered the accidental threat made by Seth among the last things he uttered—"I will haunt you when I am dead"—and the fearful words, "*I will haunt you when I am dead—I will haunt you when I am dead,*" rang constantly in his ears; and so strong were his guilty fears, and so nervous and excitable had he become, that to him the menace was often literally fulfilled in the dread shapings of his distempered imagination. By day he appeared abstracted or restless—now heedless and lost to every thing around him—now wildly starting at the rustling of every leaf; and by night roaring out in his sleep, and disturbing his wondering people by his strange and almost unearthly outcries.

Such was the punishment of the miserable Elder; but whether this was not rather the result of his fears than any sincere penitence making for his own benefit, we will not attempt to decide. One thing, however, is certain: it operated greatly to the relief of the before persecuted Martha; for, from the eventful night on which she parted with her lover, she saw for several weeks no indications of any renewal of her trials. Much, indeed, did she wonder to what cause she owed this happy exemption; though she believed it, without being able to tell exactly why, to have some connection with the fate of Seth, concerning which a horrid suspicion occasionally flitted across her mind. She tried, however, to banish such suspicions from her thoughts, and charitably strove to believe that her persecutor had resolved to lay aside his designs against her peace and become a better man. But she at length began to perceive that her hopes were to be disappointed—she again saw that in the demeanor of the Elder towards her which unequivocally told her that she was still the marked victim of his unhallowed designs; and from day to day she lived in constant dread of being again summoned to the scene of her former trials. Nor was such summons long delayed. One day, as the family were retiring from their noon meals, the Elder approached the terrified girl and notified her to meet him alone after worship in the room which he had formerly desecrated by his infamous conduct; but the hapless maiden was not reserved for so wretched a fate as that which now so menacingly hung over her. An unexpected incident intervened between that and the dreaded hour, which was destined to form the most important era in her life, while it brought defeat and confusion upon her enemy.

It was a mild and pleasant afternoon in November, just four weeks after the melancholy event before described. Martha was sitting in one of the common working-rooms of the women, at work with several of the sisterhood some of whom like herself were engaged in sewing, some at the loom and some at the distaff. As she sat plying her needle, an air of deep pensiveness, sweetly tempered, however, by resignation, was resting on her lovely brow. She had been viewing with dismayed feelings and gloomy apprehensions the dismal prospect before her, and, having schooled her feelings into submission to whatever fate Providence might allot her, she turned to the images of the past and her mind was now wandering among the dearest memories of her existence. She recalled the almost forgotten circumstance that the coming night was the one proposed by her departed lover for his return to meet her, and a thousand mournful fancies took possession of her mind She imagined how, had her lover lived, her heart would now be fluttering at the thought of the approaching meeting; and then her excited imagination took wing, and she wondered if it were not true, as she had sometimes heard, that the dead were permitted to keep the appointments made by them while living, and come in spirit to the place to meet and commune with their friends: and, if so, whether should she repair to the trysting tree at the appointed hour, Seth would not be there to meet her. Faith and love answered yea; and, conscious of nothing which should make her fear such a meeting, at which, perhaps, heavenly counsel might be imparted to guide and direct her in her threatened difficulties, she half resolved to brave the summons of the Elder to meet him at the same hour, and keep the appointment. While she was thus indulging in these sad though pleasing reveries, her attention was arrested by the sound of a strange voice in the yard, belonging to some one who had just arrived, and was now engaged in conversation with several of the Shaker men. Thinking that there was something rather peculiar in the careless, rattling manner of the new comer's discourse, she arose and went to the window, when it was with a mixture of wonder and surprise that she beheld the singular and vagabond appearance of the man who had attracted her attention. His dress was not only tattered and patched, but ill-fitting and whimsical, consisting of small clothes altogether too big, with a coat as much too little; and these were surmounted by an old straw hat, entirely rimless before and not much better behind. He was evidently quite a young man, and, but for a certain kind of foolish, staring cast of countenance, would have been accounted very good looking. He seemed quite at home among his new acquaintances, and was not at all bashful about making inquiries, many of which were so very simple and childish as to provoke a smile upon the sober visages even of the elders themselves. After asking a thousand foolish questions and rattling away awhile disconnectedly, widessly enough to have made a good prototype of Bunyan's Talkative, he carelessly observed that, as for himself, he was now entirely out of work and out of any home, and he really wished he could find some good place to live where he could get enough to eat, for he set a great deal by victuals.

Instantly taking the hint from this observation of the vagabond, and believing him to be about simple enough to make them a good subject, the Shaker leaders were not slow to propose to him to join the family, and at once take up his residence at their establishment.

To this the fellow replied that he had often heard say that the Shakers were a mighty good people, and he sometimes thought he should like to live with them; but, as he had never seen them before, he should like to go round and look a little at things before he told them sartain about staying; and if they would give him something to eat, and then let him go round where he was a mind to that afternoon, he would tell them at night what he would do.

The man was accordingly soon furnished with an excellent meal, at which he appeared highly gratified. After this, free permission having been granted him for the purpose, he commenced his rambles over the farm, thro' the barns, yards and out-houses, inspecting the crops, stock and every thing connected with the establishment with childish curiosity and the greatest apparent interest, often leaving the objects of his examination and running to the Shakers to ask some question, and then racing back in high glee to his employment. When he seemed to have satisfied himself with viewing every thing out of doors he went to the elders and told them he wanted to see the *women works*. He did not, be sure, he said, think women of much use generally, but, as they had to get the victuals and make the clothes, he should like mighty well to go in and see how they carried on awhile.

Although this was contrary to their general custom, yet the leaders, conceiving they had the making of a proselyte at stake, and evidently viewing the fellow as a weak-minded, harmless creature, soon concluded to humour him in this freak as they had done in every thing else; and, therefore, told him to behave well, but go where he pleased.

Quickly availing himself of the permission he began the rounds of the different female lodges, making, however, but a brief stay in any one till he came to the room where Martha was at work with the small party of her companions. Here he leisurely walked round, reviewing with an air of wondering simplicity the work of these demure artisans, making his silly comments, and, as usual, asking a variety of irrelevant questions, and among the rest the names of all the different females in the apartment.

Although the conversation and conduct of the stranger went clearly to show him to be a very great simpleton, yet there was a certain something about him which soon led the discerning Martha to doubt whether he was quite what he pretended, and what the rest of the family obviously considered him; and that doubt was greatly strengthened in a short time, as, looking up, she caught him fixing a keen, steady, intelligent look upon her face, entirely at variance with the vacant or idotic expression which had seemed to characterize his features. And it was with a sort of undefinable interest that she the next moment saw him approaching her, as he now did, with the remark that he wanted to see what this woman was making too. Accordingly he took up part of the work lying in her lap, when, as he was flourishing it about, under pretence of examining it, he slily dropped a small, closely sealed billet into her open hand. As soon as he saw her fingers close over the paper, he threw down the work over her hand, and, with the eagerly whispered injunction, "*Read and give me token,*" whipped off to look at something else which seemed suddenly to have caught his attention.

Feigning some errand out, Martha soon disappeared on her way to her private chamber. In a few minutes the stranger returned to finish his inspection of Martha's work, during which, though as busy and talkative as ever, he might have been seen to throw many a keen and anxious glance towards the door through which the fair absentee was expected to return. At length she made her appearance. A close observer would have at once noticed that during her absence she had been agitated by powerful emotions, and had wept profusely; and yet through the subsiding shower, the first smile that lit up her face for a month was stealing over her lovely features while anything but displeasure marked the general expression of her glowing countenance.

On entering the room she went immediately to an elderess, and, with the air of one slightly annoyed, asked if she had not better hint to the man the propriety of his now retiring; and, having received permission to do so, she approached him, and, with a look which he seemed readily to understand, observed:—

Thy visit has been very acceptable, and thy communications shall be heeded; but we think that now, perhaps thee would find more to divert thee among the men in the field.

With some careless remarks in good keeping with the character he had been acting, the man immediately left the apartment and proceeded to the field where the men were at work, and where, in chatting with them, trying his hand occassionally at their work and rambling over the premises, he spent the remainder of the afternoon, apparently highly delighted with his situation.

When the family assembled for supper, however, the fellow was unaccountably missing; but the Shakers, having seen so much of his erractic movements, and supposing him still to be somewhere about the farm or buildings, did not seem to pay much attention to the circumstance, or think it worth their while to institute any search for him; and their evening meal, through all the different apartments of the family, passed off with customary quietness.

After finishing their repast, as usual the whole family, just as the stars were begining to twinkle in the clear blue of the November sky, took their way to the house of worship, which was an unenclosed building opening to the main road, a branch of which turned up and ran directly by the doors. The ceremonies of worship, also, were attended with no unusual occurrence, and, being concluded, the assembly broke up to return to their respective lodges. But on opening the doors and coming out on the steps, the foremost of the company, to their surprise, beheld a horse and chaise drawn up within a few yards of the door, allotted to the use of the females the door for the males being some thirty feet towards the other end of the house. By the side of the horse a man, young and fashionably dressed, as far as his appearence could be judged of in the starlight, stood holding the reins and the whip, with his face turned toward the door, and in the seeming attitude of waiting The women came hesitating down the steps, and there coming to a stand, began timidly and silently to stretch forward their heads and peer at the mysterious stranger. The men, also, coming out and seeing the unexpectant visitant and his equipage stationed across the path of the women, began with low whispered inquiries of I—es, to gather toward the spot. In this stage of the affair, Elder Higgins, who had purposed to remain in the house till all had retired that he might pass unobserved to the room where he was expecting the next moment to meet the victim of his designs, got impatient at the tardy movement of the people and came bustling through the throng with a light in his hand to ascertain the cause of the delay, when the stranger suddenly turned round and confronted him. The instant the light struck upon the face of the latter the reconciling Elder uttered a convulsive shriek and, with wildly glaring eyes and chattering teeth, sunk down upon the ground in horror and affright at the apparition which he believed he beheld. A commotion was now observed among the huddling and startled females, and the next moment a light figure rapidly made her way through the crowd.

"It is!" she exclaimed in low, eager accents. It is! Oh! it is he, she repeated, and springing forward, threw herself into the arms of the stranger, who, lightly swinging her into the seat of his vehicle, turned again towards the crowd.

Viper! he exclaimed, advancing with brandished fist close to the appalled and nearly prostrate Elder; "viper, thou art baffled!"

With this he turned about, leaped nimbly into his seat, by the side of the fair companion he had just placed there, applied the whip to his horse, and dashed forward for the main road, leaving the whole assembled family of Shakers standing aghast and bewildered with astonishment and perplexity at what had so suddenly and inexplicably passed before them.

As dreadfully frightened as the guilt-smitten Elder had been, he was yet the first to comprehend the mystery and rally for the rescue.

The fiend, he fiercely cried, leaping up & pointing with frantic gestures after the carriage. "Oh the fiend! the apostate—the reprobate, the godless reprobate, is carrying off Martha! Pursue him! stop him! catch him! save her from the villian! Run, run for your lives, or they will escape us!"

Roused by the commands and the eager and furious manner of their leader, the men, followed by the women, rushed promiscuously down the road in pursuit of the fugitives; but scarcely had they passed the line of the buildings in this disorderly rout and gained the main road where it became enclosed by fences, when a rope suddenly sprang from the dust across the path against the legs or uplifted feet of the foremost rank of pursuers; and the next instant a platoon of Shakers were rolling and sprawling upon the ground, while those in the rear, unable to check their speed in time to save themselves rank after rank came successively tumbling and floundering down the bank of their falling companions, till nearly the whole bevy were prostrate and scrambling on all fours to the road.

At this juncture the wild, rattling laugh of the missing vagabond was heard behind the stone-fence against one end of the mischief-making spring-rope, and the next instant a gaily dressed young man leaped nimbly over the fence into the road, and made a brief pause a few paces ahead of the fallen, and confused forces of the pursuing enemy.

"May be, friends," he said in a half jovial, half commisserating tone, as he glanced at the disorderly plight of his recent entertainers, "may be you don't know me with my Sunday clothes on? Well, well, good people, perhaps it is rather a provoking case; but here is about twenty yards of good new rope I will leave you, by way of reparation for your hospitality this afternoon and your tumble this evening. It is the best I can do by you now, I believe, though if you should ever cage another such rare bird as the one just flown yonder, and should be in want of more rope—but I can't stay to chat any longer at this time. So good bye, thee and thou!"

So saying, and leaving the discomfited Shakers to gather themselves up in the best way they could, he bounded forward a few rods, leaped upon a horse which stood tied in a nook in the fence, and gallopped off after the receding carriage now rattling away in the distance.

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"And what then?" I asked, perceiving that the narrator had come to a stand, with the air of one who had arrived at the end of his history. "What next happened?"

Why, nothing very unnatural, I believe," replied my host with a humorous smile, "unless you make it out from the fact that an old Justice of the Peace, living some eight or ten miles from the scene of action, was called up that night to do a little business in the marrying line."

"And the bride on the occasion," I asked, somewhat puzzled to comprehend the developement, "the bride was your heroine, Martha, of course; but the bridegroom? Not Seth, surely, for he was drowned, you know."

"Perhaps, friend," answered my host with waggish gravity, "perhaps he was not drowned as much as some, after all; but, rising to the surface after his plunge, and seeing the wicked attitude of the Elder, suddenly changed his plan, and, so sinking under again with some little sham of drowning, came up silently under a neighbouring clump of bushes—crept away with the loss of his shoe and broad-brim—went to a young farmer of his acquaintance—exchanged his wet Quaker gear for a decent suit of clothes, and set off for the residence of his late uncle, where he arrived the next day, and to his agreeable surprise found himself in possession of one of the best little farms on the Merrimac, and where in due time he, in conjunction with a young friend, concocted the plan which you have seen executed."

"A romantic coming out, upon my soul!" I exclaimed in delight; "and you knew the parties—are they still alive? and do they reside in this vicinity? I would go almost any distance to see them."

"You would have no very serious journey to perform for that purpose, I imagine," he replied significantly.

"Why?—How?" I asked, still in doubt respecting the full developement.

"Why, verily, my friend," said my host, casting an arch look at my perplexed countenance, and speaking in the Quaker dialect, "verily, thee art not so shrewd a guesser as I supposed thee, else thee had smelt the rat long ago."

"Stupid!" I cried; "stupid, indeed!—But I see it all now—the hero, Seth, is now before, and the heroine, the good Martha—"

"Run away," he interrupted, laughingly, "run away, as you might have noticed, perhaps, at the beginning of the description by which she was introduced; but the hero, being more modestly described, made out to stand the racket without running."

"One more question only," said I; "the young friend, who, in the character of a vagabond, took your letter to Martha and so finely managed the affair—"

"Was also from this neighbourhood," he replied. "You noticed, perhaps, as you came along, a mile or two back, a two-story white house, with an office in the yard?"

"I did, thinking it a very neat establishment," I answered.

"Well" he rejoined, "that is the—though, perhaps, Esquire Wentworth would not thank me for telling of his pranks when he first started life as a lawyer. It was the making of the man, however: people seeing how cleverly he had managed a love case, concluded he would be no slouch at a law case, if he had one. He rose rapidly after that. But enough of this. Seth and Martha, my children," he continued, calling to his eldest boy and girl, still up, and reading in the kitchen; "one of you take a mug, the other a candle, and go down and draw us a mug of the best cider you can find in the cellar. This Shaker story has made my throat as dry as a tin trumpet."

Washington, April 7.

Funeral of General Harrison.—There have been three remarkable pageants in honor of General Harrison within six weeks. The first, of a hearty welcome on his arrival here from North Bend; the second, of his inauguration, which thousands and thousands attended; and the last, this day, of his burial, mournful, and awful, even, which eclipses all others in the grandeur of its spectacle, as well as the dreadful solemnity of its display. The crowds here seem to be greater than on the day of Inauguration, and the Funeral procession was of immense numbers, and of such extent that it covered Pennsylvania Avenue, from the President's House to the Capitol.

Mr. Tyler, (late Vice President,) who had been sent for by express to Virginia, arrived early yesterday morning, and whatever honors could do have been done, whether in the exercise of the civil or the military or naval powers of the Government. From Philadelphia to Richmond the people have poured forth; the whole Legislature of Maryland attended in a body; military companies from Baltimore and Annapolis were also present; while the immediately surrounding country rushed in, as not before, since the death of Washington upon Mount Vernon.

The Foreign Ministers, in full Court dress, came in state, with their equipages and livery, to the President's House, about 10 o'clock. The Corpse was on a bier in the centre of the Great East Room, surrounded by the various Officers of Government, Members of Congress and others who had the entre of the House, and the family and relatives of Gen. Harrison—all in deep mourning. Around the whole circle, standing, were the 26 Pall Bearers, 1 for each State in the Union. They wore white silk scarfs brought over the shoulder, with a black crepe rosette on their bosoms, crape on their arms, and crape on their hats.

The Procession was a large and brilliant display. The Military leading off, with drums muffled and colours hung with crape. About forty Clergymen and the four attending Physicians to the President preceded the funeral car.

The Funeral Car was one of the most magnificent ever seen in the country. It was drawn by six beautiful white horses, and at the head of each horse was a black groom, dressed in a white Roman Toga, fastened round his waist by a black cincture,—with white turbans on, adorned with black crape. Black crape was also on each arm. Their appearance was very impressive. The Coffin was elevated conspicuously on a bier, a rich black velvet Pall covering it. It was so high as to be visible to all. Violets and hyacinths wrought into wreaths, were interwoven among the habiliments of woe. All eyes, of course, were intently fixed upon this.

The 26 Pall Bearers walked on each side of the Funeral Car.

The Family and Relatives, with the Heads of the Departments, followed the hearse in carriages.

At half-past two o'clock the corpse reached the Congressional Burying Ground. When the body was taken to the vault where it is to rest, all the official functionaries left their carriages, and marched to the spot, and when the Church service was read by the Rev. Mr. Hawley, the scene was so affecting that the tears trickled down the cheeks of hundreds. The old and new Cabinets followed the corpse with the family, to the very tomb; as also every Foreign Minister.

About 3 o'clock, the burial was over, when discharges of musketry commenced, which were kept up continually for a long time.—The Procession did not re-form, but all left of their own will in their various groups, after a long, last farewell of the Hero and Statesman who has been consigned to his long home.

Capt. T. W. French has been appointed Barrack-Master at St. John, New-Brunwick, vice Capt. H. Edmonds, removed to Cephalonia.

Appalling Accident and Loss of Six Lives at Cork.—The ship Lotus, having arrived off Cove on Monday morning, from Saint John, N.B., for orders, a pilot-boat was hired by the master to come in for his letters, and the second mate of the ship sent in by her. Off Ringabella the boat was upset, and, melancholy to relate, the five men (her crew) and the mate of the ship were drowned. The crew of the boat were John and Patrick Hartnet, (brothers,) James Ingram, Patrick Hayes and Edward Connor.

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