

TWO CHRISTMAS EVES. THE FIRST CHRISTMAS EVE.

The sun was setting slowly over the hills in the mountainous county of Westmoreland, and the dark green trees stood out in bold relief against the gold and crimson sky.

Madeline Austin—for this is the name of the girl—is tall and slight, of about two and twenty years of age, not pretty to the casual observer, but possessing an attractive quality.

Presently a heavy step comes crunching over the crisp snow and a loud voice says, "Good evening, Miss Madeline, a penny for your thoughts."

"Oh, no," rejoined the Squire with a laugh; "I am the best judge of that; but stay, have you heard the news about Geoffrey Lyndon?"

"What," says the girl, turning pale and stretching out her right hand to support herself against the fence.

"Squire Marston watches her retreating figure till it is out of sight, then gives a long, low whistle, which carries up the hillside and reaches the astonishment of the Squire's attendant."

"Now John Marston had long cherished for Madeline Austin, a secret liking. I cannot dignify it by the name of love, such natures as his are incapable of that in its highest and most ennobling sense."

"Ivan Austin was a young man of about six and twenty, and his character lacked all those good qualities so highly developed in that of his sister; he was weak, cowardly and extravagant to the last degree."

"The morning after Squire Marston's dinner-party, the inhabitants of the quiet town were startled by the news that Mr. Green's house had been broken into the night before."

"There is hardly ever a complete silence in our souls. God is whispering to us well nigh incessantly. In the soul, or sink low, then we hear these whisperings of God. He is always whispering to us, only we do not always hear, because of the noise and hurry, and distraction which life causes as it hurries on."

saying in a peremptory tone, "Geoffrey Lyndon, I arrest you in the name of the Queen."

It is a windy March morning; cold and cheerless; a biting east wind blowing over the Westmoreland hills; but in spite of the unpromising state of the weather the little town of Westmoreland is all alive with the bustle of the Christmas season.

But hush! there is a stir amongst the crowd of guests at the Squire Marston and his friends. Peter Leicester, walk into the church, and then come the numerous false alarms and whippers of "here she comes," "now I see her," "look, look," which are inevitable at every wedding.

Again it is Christmas Eve, but three years later, and Time, with its levelling hand, has softened somewhat old grievances and explained away mistakes.

"Blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord." But see! a dark shadow intercepts the light and Squire Marston advances and stands with bent head and drooping shoulders close to the tomb of his wife.

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To character and success, a two things, contradictory as they seem, must go together—humble dependence and manly independence. Humble dependence on God and manly reliance on self.—Wordsworth.

GODFREY, THE FENIAN.

and the Ahearnes' friends that she wished and intended, but every one knew that in point of 'family,' not to mention 'old stock of the country side' or 'blood,' she was nobody and nothing.

More whiskey punch was made. A fiddle began to make itself heard from the barn, and one by one the company straggled across the yard, to where a great fiddler of light began to glow yellow and yellow in the thickening twilight.

Chichele turned away; he had recognised in Luke the man who had told him that a common name would not answer the Mauleverers.

Chichele scarcely heard Gertrude. He held out his hand amicably to her, but she never noticed it. She was hanging on Father Paul's arm, and he was talking to her of the scraping of the fiddle and the rhythmic movement of the 'step dances' could be distinctly heard.

"Where is Miss Mauleverer?" questioned Harry Quinn. "My mother wants to see you."

"I will come directly," returned Marion, speaking with Chichele's eyes upon her face.

"You here," she cried, rising startled from her seat.

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on the wall just where the light of a hoop of candles fell on his face.

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them against the light. Mary Ahearne, it is burning sin, and anyhow that is a Protestant that gentleman."

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