

Poetry.

THE RIVER.

The liquid river
In rippling gleam
Flows on and onward
Into the sea.

The laughing sunbeams
Glint over the stream,
Sending bright pictures
With transient gleam.

In sunshine brightest
Responsive light;
In wavelets glimmer
Reflexed bright.

The moonbeams silver
The waters of
Chasing dark shadows
Beyond the shore.

The singing reeds
Joyous and gay,
Glide on the wind
All hush the day.

The sobbing river,
In longing waves,
Wails of the lost ones
In watery graves.

Glide on fair river
With majesty,
Carry thy secrets
Of destiny.

Literature.

ALREADY DEAD.

Lina Herbert was in the merriest mood, romping with her younger sisters and brothers, when her mother, wearing a serious and solemn expression, walked into the nursery, and desired an audience from her daughter.

"The children, finding themselves about to be deprived of so valuable and congenial a companion, roosterously demanded that Lina should be left to add to their hilarity. 'I will come back in a minute,' said she, soothingly, supposing some grave domestic duty to be the cause of her temporary removal.

She found, much to her astonishment, that her mother was in domestic affairs the time was to be, its nature was not calculated to leave her in a mood to continue her childish sports.

She followed in her mother's footsteps across the hall, and into the library, and stood before her looking anxiously.

"I have a message from your father, Lina," commenced Mrs. Herbert.

Lina Herbert was a very good girl at all times, but at this moment she looked charming. There was lingering in her black eyes the charm of brightness which her youthful palme had imparted to them. Her cheeks were flushed, and the color had heightened by the unexpected appearance of her mother. Her mouth was partially open, as if to utter some great piece of news, and yet her distant nostrils betokened some dread anxiety.

After re-adjusting her dress, Mrs. Herbert continued:

"Your father and I have been talking over a matter which seems pending between yourself and Harry Marlow. While we have known him for many years, we cannot consent to your ever becoming his wife. Your father is unmoved on this subject, so you had better set upon this suggestion, and give Harry to understand his position to be that of an acquaintance or old friend, but nothing more. There are substantial reasons for this."

"Your substantial reasons are of course your own, but if I guess rightly, your strong objections to my father's objection, is poverty. I cannot see why you or father should make this the detriment of it. I will be willing to become a poor man's wife, and abide the consequences. Harry will not play the fool. He is a young professional man, industrious and ambitious, and capable of doing. And as I am nearly nineteen years of age, I really think myself capable of judging for myself."

"This was spoken in a most decided tone. Mrs. Herbert having been a listener, at this moment quickly walked up to Lina and said:

"And if you are capable of judging for yourself, it shall not be under my roof. You owe a debt of gratitude and obedience to your parents, which they demand of you. When I say I mean, depend upon it. What raising his hand to strengthen his resolution, he added, 'I declare if you should ever marry Harry Marlow, I should discard you forever. I would never tolerate either of you. The moment you become his wife I shall regard you as dead.'"

Lina dropped her eyes, and Mrs. Herbert almost winced under the threatening tone of her husband.

The silence which ensued was interrupted by a servant announcing that a gentleman in the parlor wished to speak with Mrs. Herbert.

Mother and daughter withdrew at the request of Mrs. Herbert to show the gentleman into the library.

The host turned away pale as his guest entered.

"Good morning, Mr. Flintakin," said the trembling man.

"Good morning," was the cool reply, and he seated himself in the armchair which Mrs. Herbert pushed toward him.

"Are you well?" inquired Mr. Herbert blandly.

Not heeding the query, Mr. Flintakin continued:

"I have come to say that the account between us is to be settled under my roof. The mortgage I hold on your house will be foreclosed in ten days, if you do not discharge the debt before that time. If George Herbert, you can raise money for the gambling table, you can surely manage to pay your debts."

"What!—when?—how do you know I— you assert what you shall prove," retorted Mr. Herbert.

"And I can prove what I assert," was the curt reply.

Mr. Herbert was completely silenced. In the humblest tone he begged for leave of explanation, but Mr. Flintakin desired but a direct recognition of the indebtedness, and cancelling of the same, which Mr. Herbert offered in the following form:

"You hold, at present, my note for \$20,000, for which you have, as security, a mortgage on my house. I will add to this a mortgage on my furniture, provided you will give me an extension of six months, and will also allow you a liberal bonus for this favor, as I shall be able, at the expiration of that time, to meet these payments."

Mr. Flintakin accepted the proposition, a paper was drawn up to this effect, and an arrangement was made to meet at a certain lawyers on the following day to conclude the matter.

When the unwelcome visitor had been politely bowed out of the front door, Mr. Herbert returned to his writing desk, and looked over his accounts. He summed them up, ran his fingers through his hair, and soliloquized:

"Young Fitzgerald is worth \$300,000. My liabilities are only about \$40,000, for the loan of which I will offer him a mortgage on my house and furniture. Then I will settle with Flintakin, and transfer the mortgage to my son-in-law, who will never bother me further about it. Hem!"

Such a loss of the head and wife of the

hand did Mr. Herbert indulge in, that the large inkstand, freshly filled, standing on the desk, coming in contact with his insignia of success, was knocked from its place, rolling over the splendid carpet, leaving a narrow running stream for nearly a yard in length.

Although the occurrence was calculated to cause some discomfort, Mr. Herbert found relief in the fact that it had been produced in no good cause.

Mr. Herbert was not, by habit or profession, a gambler. An inordinate love of money and display had been the mainspring of his present pecuniary embarrassments. Through business he had realized sufficient to keep up his establishment respectably. But this did not satisfy him. He had borrowed money, run largely in debt, and finally, among other means, had resorted to the gambling table, hoping to retrieve his losses. But this had launched him more deeply into the abyss of insolvency, and his house and furniture were now in the hands of creditors.

As a final resort, he had resolved to marry his daughter to a wealthy young man, possessing no other charm for his own or the opposite sex than this pecuniary attraction.

Neither Mrs. Herbert nor her daughter knew of Mr. Herbert's position, nor that in rejecting Harry Marlow's suit he had, in his mind, replaced it by another.

Lina Herbert was not a girl to be easily thwarted. There was as yet no real engagement existing between Harry Marlow and herself, but an understanding that when his business would sanction it they should contract an engagement.

To inform Harry that Mr. Herbert had rejected his consent would therefore be rather premature. But much to her astonishment, a circumstance occurred within a week, from the day of her restriction, threats, &c., from her father, which relieved her of anxiety on this subject.

Harry Marlow was paying a visit to his father Lina, when a slight sneer upon her upper lip preluded the declaration of what he had heard.

"You admire Mr. Fitzgerald, do you not, Lina?" he asked.

"Oh, not at all, Mr. Marlow."

"Then why have you thus exerted yourself to please him? He has boasted of the conquest he has made, and adds, 'she smiles so sweetly on a fellow.' You are right, Lina; he is rich, I am poor."

Lina drew herself up in indignation, and answered:

"His riches do not enrich, nor your poverty impoverish me."

Harry was charmed by her independence. He took her hand, looked earnestly into her eyes, and said:

"Lina, it may be selfish to ask you to engage yourself to me at present, but I fear to wait, lest some other may supplant me. Promise to love, to marry me, and I will labor hard to that end."

"My father will not consent—he swears it."

"And whom should you marry?"

"Will you please—this is enough, and I will manage the rest."

Silence gave consent.

She allowed the promise to be sealed upon her cherry red lips, and felt that although resolved to become Harry Marlow's wife, she had an ordeal to pass.

Harry still held her hand when Mrs. Herbert opened the door, and walked toward the table near which this plighted couple sat. Mr. Marlow offered her his chair, which she accepted, and which she did not relinquish until Mr. Marlow had left.

To avoid any interrogations, Lina sought her own room immediately after his departure. The book which she grasped for relief of mind might as well have been written in hieroglyphics as in English, or contained Watts' Hymns, or Mother Goose's Melodies, as far as her knowledge went, for her eyes saw only the menacing looks of her father, and her head was filled with plans for seeing and conversing with Harry without producing family jars and quarrels.

Harry Marlow knew the hour at which Lina took her usual morning walk. He therefore, when time would permit, made his habits to correspond with her own, and many pleasant love oaths they had had together, until the relation of this occurrence was casually mentioned by her sister Mary, who was her constant companion in these rambles.

This, therefore, here ended, and Lina was more closely watched than ever.

But Harry was not at his wife's end, as we shall see.

In less than a fortnight after he called at Mr. Herbert's house, fully prepared for any contingency. When his name was announced, Mrs. Herbert was first to welcome him by her presence, and the guests of Lina conversed with Harry, and a proposition to repair to the nursery, Lina's favorite portion of the house, was made by him. Harry fondled and romped with the two-year old Gracie, until he had the opportunity to attach a small piece of paper to her apron. Then lifting her by his arms, he set her upon Lina's lap, pointing to the billet.

Lina grasped it, but took no further notice of it until she found herself alone some time after.

Among the little declarations of love was a paragraph:

"Mr. Fitzgerald makes no secret of his intention. He declares not only to have been encouraged, but almost to have been proposed to, by your father, for you. I consider him a contemptible puppy, but be prudent in your reactions of him. Do nothing to excite suspicions of our intention for the future."

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Lina looked the picture of humility. Within her were no secret of her submission. She wrote a note to Harry, relating each occurrence of the last twenty-four hours, and mailed it to his office. In the afternoon of the following day he called, and found Lina smiling the pet Gracie upon her lap. She was again used as the medium of correspondence:

"If your father insists, dearest, upon your acceptance of F. do so provisionally, by naming the wedding day six months hence."

Lina obeyed the letter all Harry bid her do; and Mr. Herbert readily acceded to the compromise.

The weather was warm and sultry. Every family who could conveniently do so was preparing to leave the city, to pass the insufferable summer months at watering-places, or among the pleasant shade of farm-houses.

Lina Herbert was finishing a piece of embroidery, when the voice of Thomas Fitzgerald suddenly announcing his appearance, caused her to drop her needle. He sat upon a low ottoman at her feet, and without any preliminary remark, took her hand and said:

"Dear Lina, so we're going to be married soon. You will have a fine house, fine horses, fine carriage, and a fine husband."

Lina looked at him to discover what particular motive he could have in thus asserting what he called "plain truths," but defining no decided expression in his inexpressive countenance, she picked up her needle and continued her work.

Mr. Fitzgerald had a pale gray eye, which grew paler as he spoke. He had small, thin lips, and a remarkably slender and pointed nose, which corresponded wonderfully with his angular physique.

The contrast between himself and Harry was particularly striking at this moment to Lina, and as Mr. Fitzgerald lost in her estimation, so Mr. Marlow gained by the comparison.

Harry Marlow had been sitting at his desk in his office for several hours, drawing up important documents. He had finished them, folded them carefully, and laid them in a drawer, and cast his eyes at the clock hanging upon the side of the wall before him.

"Four o'clock; I have another hour to spare before going to dinner. I will occupy it with— and a nod of the head concluded his intention.

Taking a small sheet of note paper, he filled it, crossed and recrossed it, doubled it to its smallest capacity, and placed it in his pocket book.

He left his office, went to dinner, and immediately after was wending his way towards Mr. Herbert's house.

The nursery door was closed for the night when Harry Marlow arrived. The paper in the pocket book was to be transferred to Lina; but as Mr. Fitzgerald's presence was added to that of the mother, the task proved to be doubly difficult, and trebly necessary, as the family expected to leave the city in the course of a very few days.

Much ingenuity as Harry possessed, he could devise no means by which to execute his mission. He therefore bade good night, after a short visit, and deep contemplation, strolled out upon the street.

The first person he encountered was a boy carrying a bouquet in one hand, while in the other he held a note which he was reading. It suggested an idea to him.

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