

An Old Road.

A curve of green tree-tops,
And a common wall below,
And a winding road, that dips and drops
Ah me! where does it go?

Somewhere beneath that hill
Are children's running feet,
And a little garden fair and still,
Were never flowers so sweet!

Up this oft-trodden slope
What visions rise and throng!
What keen remembrance of Hope
Lie shattered all along!

Here I believed in fame,
And found no room for fear;
Here sprang to meet what never came;
Here loved—what is not here!

The child in the fairy tale,
Dropped tokens as he passed,
So pierced the darkness forest veil
And found his home at last;

For there they lie asleep,
Eyes that made all things sweet,
Hands of true pressure, hearts more deep
Than any left to beat;

Pictures, and dreams, and tears—
O Love, is this the whole?
Nay, wrap your everlasting years
About my falling soul!

SELECT STORY.

The Wife.

I AM hopeless! said the young man,
in a voice that was painfully desponding. Utterly hopeless! Heaven
knows I have tried hard to get employ-
ment! But no one has need of my ser-
vice. The pittance doled out by your
father, and which comes with a sense of
humiliation that is absolutely heart-
crushing, is scarcely sufficient to pro-
vide this miserable abode, and keep hun-
ger from our door. But for your sake,
I would not touch a shilling of your mo-
ney if I starved.

Hush, dear Edward! returned the
gentle girl, who had left father, mother,
and a pleasant home, to share the lot
of him she loved; and she laid a finger
on his lips, while she drew her arm
around him.

Agnes, said the young man, I cannot
endure this life much longer. The na-
tive independence of my character re-
volts at our present condition. Months
have elapsed, and yet the ability I pos-
sess finds no employment. In this coun-
try, every avenue is crowded.

The room in which they were over-
looked the sea.
But there is another land, where, if
what we hear be true, ability finds em-
ployment and talent a sure reward.

And, as Agnes said this, in a voice
of encouragement she pointed from the
window towards the expanse of waters
that stretched far away toward the
south and west.

America! The word was uttered in a
quick, earnest voice.

Yes,
Agnes, I thank you for this sugges-
tion! Return to the pleasant home you
left for one who cannot procure for you
even the plainest comforts of life, and I
will cross the ocean to seek a better for-
tune in that land of promise. The sepa-
ration, painful to both, will not, I
trust, belong.

Edward, replied the young wife, with
enthusiasm, as she drew her arm more
tightly about his neck, I will never
leave thee nor forsake thee! Where
thou goest I will go, where thou liest I
will lie, Thy people shall be my people
and thy God my God.

Would you forsake all, said Edward,
in surprise, and go away with me into a
strange land?

It will be no stranger to me than it
will be to you, Edward.

No, no, Agnes! I will not think of

that, said Edward Marvel, in a positive
voice. If I go to that land of promise,
it must first be alone.

Alone! A shadow fell over the face
of Agnes. Alone! It cannot—it must
not be!

But think, Agnes. If I go alone, it
will cost me but a small sum to live
until I find some business, which may
not be for weeks, or even months, after
I arrive in the New World.

What if you were to be sick? the
frame of Agnes slightly quivering as she
made this suggestion.

We will not think of that.

I cannot help thinking of it, Edward.
Therefore entreat me not to leave thee
nor to return from following after thee.
Where thou goest, I will go.

Marvel's countenance became more
serious.

No, no. And the sick man shook his
head slowly. There is none to ask for
me. Did you say it was a young wo-
man? he inquired, soon after. His mind
dwelt on the occurrence.

Yes. A young woman with a fair
complexion and deep blue eyes.

Marvel looked up quickly into the
face of the attendant, while a flush came
into his cheeks.

She was a slender young girl, with
light hair, and her face was pale as from
trouble.

Agnes! Agnes! exclaimed Marvel,
rising up. But no, no, he added,
mournfully, sinking back again upon
the bed; that cannot be. I left her far
away over the wide ocean.

Will you write? said the nurse, after
some moments.

The invalid without unclosing his
eyes, slowly shook his head. A little
while the attendant lingered in the room
and then retired.

Dear, dear Agnes! murmured Ed-
ward Marvel, closing his eyes, and let-
ting his thoughts go, swift-winged,
across the billowy sea. Shall I never
look on your sweet face again? Never
feel your light arms about my neck, or
your breath warm on my cheek? Oh
that I had never left you! Heaven
give thee strength to bear the trouble in
store.

For many minutes he lay, there alone,
with his eyes closed in sad self-commu-
nion. Then he heard the door open and
close softly; but he did not look up.
His thoughts were far, far away. Light
feet approached quickly; but he scarcely
heeded them. A form bent over him;
but his eyes remained shut, nor did he
open them until warm lips were pressed
against his own, and a low voice, thrill-
ing through his whole being, said,—
Edward!

Agnes! was his quick response, while
his arms were thrown eagerly around
the neck of his wife. Agnes! Agnes!
Have I awakened from a fearful dream?

Yes, it was indeed her of whom he
had been thinking. The moment she
received his letter, informing her that
he had left for the United States, she
resolved to follow him in the next
steamer that sailed. This purpose she
immediately avowed to her parents. At
first, they would not listen to her; but
finding that she would, most probably,
elude their vigilance, and get away in
spite of all efforts to prevent her, they
deemed it more wise and prudent to
provide her with everything necessary
for the voyage, and to place her in the
care of the captain of the steamship in
which she was to go. In New York
they had friends, to whom they gave
her letters fully explanatory of her mis-
sion, and earnestly commending her to
their care and protection.

Two weeks before the ship in which
Edward Marvel sailed reached her des-
tination, Agnes was in New York. Be-
fore her departure, she had sought but
in vain, to discover the name of the
vessel in which her husband had em-
barked. On arriving in the New World
she was therefore uncertain whether he
had preceded her in a steamer, or was
still lingering on the way.

The friends to whom Agnes brought
letters received her with great kindness
and gave her all the advice and as-
sistance needed under the circumstances.

But two weeks, went by without a
word of intelligence on the one subject
that absorbed her every thought. Sadly
was her health beginning to suffer.
Sunken eyes and pale cheeks attested
the weight of suffering that was on
her.

One day it was announced that a
Liverpool packet had arrived with the
ship fever on board, and that several of
the passengers had been removed to the
hospital.

A thrill of fear went through the
heart of the anxious wife. It was soon
ascertained that Marvel had been a pas-
senger on board of this vessel; but, from
some cause, nothing in regard to him
beyond this fact could she learn. Against
all persuasion she started for the hospi-
tal, her heart oppressed with a fearful
presentiment that he was either dead

or struggling in the grasp of a fatal
malady. On making inquiry at the
hospital, she was told that the one she
sought was not there, and she was about
returning to the city when the truth
reached her ears.

Is he very ill? she asked, struggling
to compose herself.

Yes, he is extremely ill, was the re-
ply, and it might not be well for you,
under the circumstances, to see him at
present.

Not well for his wife to see him? re-
turned Agnes. Tears sprang to her
eyes at the thought of not being per-
mitted to come near in his extremity. Do
not say that. Oh, take me to him! I
will save his life.

You must be very calm, said the
nurse; for it was with her she was talk-
ing. The least excitement may be
fatal.

Oh, I will be calm and prudent.

Yet, even while she spoke, her frame
quivered with excitement. But she
controlled herself when the moment of
meeting came, and, though her unex-
pected appearance produced a shock,
it was salutary rather than injurious.

My dear, dear Agnes! said Edward
Marvel, a month from this time, as they
sat alone in the chamber of a pleasant
house in New York, I owe you my life.
But for your prompt resolution to fol-
low me across the sea, I would in all
probability, now be sleeping the sleep
of death. Oh, what would I not suffer
for your sake?

As Marvel uttered the last sentence,
a troubled expression flitted over his
countenance. Agnes gazed tenderly
into his face, and asked,—
Why this look of doubt and anxiety?

Need I answer the question? return-
ed the young man. It is, thus far, no
better with me than when we left our
old home. Though health is coming
back through every fibre, and my heart
is filled with an eager desire to relieve
these kind friends of the burden of our
support, yet no prospect opens.

No cloud came stealing darkly over
the face of the young wife. The sun-
shine, so far from being dimmed was
brighter.

Let not your heart be troubled, said
she, with a beautiful smile. All will come
out right.

Right, Agnes? It is not right for me
to depend on strangers.

You need depend but a little while
longer. I have already made warm
friends here, and, through them, se-
cured you employment. A good place
awaits you as soon as strength to fill it
comes back to your weakened frame.

Angel! exclaimed the young man,
overcome with emotion at so unexpected
a declaration.

No, not an angel, calmly replied
Agnes, only a wife. And now, dear
Edward, she added, never again, in any
extremity, think for a moment of meet-
ing trials or enduring privations alone.
Having taken a wife, you cannot move
safely on your journey unless she moves
by your side.

Angel! Yes, you are my good angel,
repeated Edward.

Call me what you will, said Agnes
with a sweet smile, as she brushed, with
her delicate hand, the hair from his
temples, but let me be your wife. I
ask no better name, no higher station.

Over the River.

WOMAN, somewhat pale, and
bearing evidence of much toil and
suffering, yet about whose face was
a beaming radiance of joy and rare sweet-
ness of expression, stood before a cheer-
ful fire in the kitchen of a country home.
There was something in her bearing
that told of a sunny nature, a warm
heart, a gentle disposition, despite all
the cares and misfortunes which it had
been her fate to suffer. There was an
ease and grace in the appearance of Mrs.
Logan which always caused her pres-
ence to bring sunshine and joy to those
about her. She had just completed the
arrangement of her tea-table, and was
contemplating whether she could add
any more, to her already inviting little
meal. Presently, leaving her position
before the fire, she walked to the win-
dow and peered out into the darkness.

I wonder why he does not come, she
mused. It is getting late, and he certainly
cannot see to work now. I know he
will be very tired, and I'm sure my sup-
per will please him.

Soon well-known footsteps were heard,
the door opened, and a good-looking,
sturdy young man entered the room.
He was covered from head to foot with
great flakes of snow.

The lips of the woman parted with a
smile, and her bright blue eyes shone
with love as she gazed on the new-comer.

Are you cold? she asked, kindly.
Come, I have a good fire, and supper is
nearly ready,

Well, mother, was his reply, I am
glad supper is so near ready, for I am
awfully hungry and tired, too. Besides,
I'm going over the river to-night.

What! over the river on such a stormy
night as this?

Instantly the joyful expression of her
face turned to one of anxious inquiry.

Yes, mother, he replied, firmly, yet
respectfully, that is my intention.

But you have worked hard all day,
and must be very tired.

True; I have worked hard, and cut
more wood than ever before in a single
day. There's not a boy in the village
who can boast of having done so much.

However, he continued, I am not going
for my own pleasure, but to urge father
to come home.

Ab, Tim, my boy, she replied, sadly,
I fear your errand will be fruitless.

It may be so, but I trust not—ay, I
am confident that it will not.

Tim divested himself of his overcoat,
and then sat down on a stool before the
stove; placing his elbow on his knee, he
gazed intently into the fire. The bright
blaze from the open hearth cast a flick-
ering light on the boy's face, and Mrs.
Logan watched anxiously its sad, weary
expression.

Where is Julia? asked Tim, present-
ly, rising from his seat. I had not
thought of her before.

Asleep. She has not felt well to day,
and it is best not to disturb her.

Slipping quietly into the next room,
he paused before a bed on which lay a
delicate-looking girl. He bent forward
and imprinted a kiss on her hot and
flushed cheek. On returning to the
kitchen, supper was announced, but the
meal was eaten in silence, for the moth-
er's thoughts were too sad for words.

At last Tim arose, took down his hat
and coat, and prepared to go out.

What! going so soon, Tim? I had
hoped to have your company a part of
the evening. We have been very lonely
—Julia and I.

Yes, mother, the sooner I go the
sooner I shall be able to come back.

If you are determined to go, said Mrs.
Logan, promise me that you will not go
to Lucas Wright's saloon.

I—I—don't— No, mother, I will
not.

Thank you, Tim; it will be a great
relief to me.

Except, he continued, hesitatingly, it
be necessary to go there to find father.

In that case, my dear boy, give me
your promise not to drink. I know you
have acquired an appetite for liquor,
and my earnest prayer shall ever be that
you may not know the sad fate of your
erring father.

The promise was freely given, and
the mother listened to the quick strides
of her boy as he crossed the piazza.

Then she turned back to her work hum-
ming the tune of some familiar song
with which she had so often filled the
air with music in the happy days of the
long-ago, when her heart was light, and
her soul filled with joy and gladness;
but now the burden of her song was
sadness, and though the strain was full
of harmony, she continued it only to
drive away a sense of loneliness and des-
pair.

Her thoughts carried her back to the
happy days of her childhood, when she
was allowed to roam at will through
field and forest, her merry laughter
ringing with joyousness as she revelled
in the beauties and mysteries of nature.
Then, when she was scarcely eight
years of age, her mother died, leaving
her alone in the world. Having no
home she was taken to the poor-house,
where she remained two years. At that
time a well-to-do merchant was favor-
ably struck with her winsom ways and
sparkling blue eyes, and concluded to
adopt her.

[CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.]

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