'Darling, muttered Frank, biting his lip, and looking really annoyed; 'O Miss Coventry! O Kate! give me an opportunity to explain ah.'

'Explain nothing,' was my reply; 'we understand each other perfectly. It is time for me to go in and dress.' So I marched into the house, and left him looking for all Frank ever could look foolish—on the doorstep. As I hurried along the passages, I encountered Lady Scapegrace.

'What's the matter, Kate?' said she, following me into my room; 'you look as if something had happened. No bad news, I trust, from Aunt Deborah?'

I burst into tears. Kindness always overcomes me completely, and then I make a fool of myself.

'Nothing's the matter,' I sobbed out, 'only I am tired and nervous, Lady Scapegrace, and I want to dress.'

My hostess slipped quietly out of the room, and presently returned with some *sal volatile* and water; she made me drink it every drop.

'I must have a talk to you, Kate,' said she, 'but not now; the dinner-bell will ring in ten minutes, and she, too, hurried away to perform her toilette.

As I get older, I take to moralising; and I am afraid I waste a good deal of valuable time in speculating on the thoughts, ideas, and, so to speak, the inner life of my neighbors. It is curious to observe a large well-dressed party seated at dinner, all apparently frank and open as the day, full of fun and good humor, saying whatever comes uppermost, and to all outward seeming laying bare every crevice and cranny of their hearts, and then to reflect that each one of the throng has a separate life, entirely distinct from that which he or she parades before the public, cherished perhaps with a miser's care, or endured with a martyr's fortitude. Sir Guy, staying at the bottom of his table, drinking rather more wine than usual—perhaps because it was Sunday, and the enforced decencies of the day had somewhat damped his spirits—looked a jovial, thoughtless, merry country gentleman, somewhat slang, it may be, and to say vulgar, but still open-hearted, generous and hospitable. Was there no skeleton in Sir Guy's mental cupboard? Were there no phantoms that would rise up, like Banquo's ghost, unbidden, at his board? While he smacked his great lips over those bumpers of dark red Burgundy, had he quite forgotten the days of old—the friends he had pledged and made fools of—the kind hearts he had loved and betrayed? Did he never fancy Damocles and the hanging sword? Could he summon courage to look into the future, or fortitude even to think of the past? Sir Guy was a strong, healthy, sensuous nature, in which the physical far outweighed the intellectual, and yet I verily believe his conscience sometimes nearly drove him mad.

Then there was my lady, sitting at the top of her table, the very picture of courtesy, affable, well bred, stress: perhaps, if anything, a little too placid and immoveable in her outward demeanor. Who would have guessed at the wild and stormy passions that slumbered beneath its calm surface? Who would suppose that stately, reserved, middle-aged woman had the reckless courage of a *bravado* and the capacity for a crime? A physiognomist might have marked the traces of strong emotion in her deep eyes and the lines about her mouth, damages done by the hand of time, that years of calm can never repair, but there had been a page or two in her history [illegible] Mr. M[illegible] spoke of [illegible] manner says, 'upright as a bolt, but all the

he think to throw dust in my eyes? There is a stage of mental suffering at which we grow naturally clear-sighted. I had arrived at it long ago. Watching every action of my neighbors, I had yet ears for all that was going around. Sir, Guy, occupying a position on the hearth-rug, with his coat-tails over his arms, was haranguing the clergyman of the parish, a quiet, *meek little man*, who came at Scamperley regularly on Sunday, and appeared frightened out of his wits. He was a man of education and intellect, a ripe scholar, a middling preacher, and a profound logician: but he was completely overpowered by coarse, ignorant, noisy Sir Guy.

'Driving—hey?' said the Baronet: 'we're all fond of driving' here, Mr. Waxy; there's a young lady who will teach you to handle the ribbons. Gad, she'd make the crop-eared mare step along. Have you got the old mare still? Devilish good old mare!'

No child of man is too learned, or too quiet, or too humble, to feel flattered at praise of his horse. Mr. Waxy blushed a mosty yellow as he replied—

'Very good of you to remember her, Sir Guy—docile and safe, and gentle withal, Sir Guy; but I don't drive her myself, Sir Guy,' added Mr. Waxy, raising his hands deprecatingly—as who should say, 'Heaven forbid! 'I don't drive myself, sir; no—no—my lad assumes the reins; and notwithstanding the potency of your Scamperley ale, Sir Guy, we manage to arrive pretty safe at our destination.'

'Quite right, Mr. Waxy,' vociferated Sir Guy. 'Did I ever tell you what happened to me once, when I took it into my head to drive my own chariot home? Look ye here, sir, I'll tell ye how it was. I was unmarried then, Mr. Waxy, and as innocent as a babe, d'ye see? Well, sir, I'd been to a *battue* at my friend Rocketer's; and what with staying to dinner, and a ball and a supper afterwards, it was very late before I started for Scamperley, and all the servants were drunk, as a matter of course. Why, sir, when I came out of the house, there were my carriage and horses standing on a line with some dozen others, and devil a soul to look after 'em. What should you have done Mr. Waxy? Sworn like a trooper, I'll warrant it!'

Mr. Waxy shook his head with an air of mild deprecation.

'Well, sir,' continued Sir Guy, 'I'll tell you what I did. I jumped on the box, sir, before you could say Jack Robinson. I put on my own coachman's box-coat, sir, and drove 'em home myself. Thinks I, "I'll give the rascals a precious benefit, they'll have to walk every mile of the way"—nine miles, and as dark as pitch, Mr. Waxy—as dark as pitch! Well, sir, I had a London footman, who was a sharpish fellow, and used to dissipation in general; he heard the carriage drive off, and ran to catch it. I gave him a pretty good breather as I rattled down the avenue. The fellow puffed like a grampus when he got up behind, making no doubt it was all right, and he hadn't been found out. The horses knew they were going home, and it wasn't long before I pulled up at my own door. Down gets John, all officiousness and alacrity to make up for past enormities, and rings a peal that might waken the dead. Directly he hears them be*ginning to unbar, he opens the carriage door* and looks in—no master! The day was just dawning. I shall never forget the fellow's face as he looked up, mistaking me, muffled as I was in my own livery, for his fellow-servant.

'I always told you how it would be, Peter,' said I, turning up a face of drunken wisdom, 'and now it's come to pass. The devil has taken Sir Guy at last, and if he's [illegible] there as he's been here, it's a precious bad bargain for both of 'em!'

Poor Mr. Waxy was obliged to laugh, but

beseech you to avoid it. Kate, you've heard of my Cousin Latimer; would you like to see his picture?'

Lady Scapegrace rose, walked to a small cabinet, unlocked it, and produced a miniature, which she placed in my hands. If the painter had not flattered him, Cousin Latimer was indeed a handsome boy. There *was genius on his wide, bold forehead, and* resolution in his firm, well-cut mouth; his large dark eyes betrayed strong passions and keen intelligence, whilst high birth was stamped on his fine features and chivalrous expression of countenance. Poor Cousin Latimer!

'Look at that, Kate,' said Lady Scapegrace, in low chilling tones; 'the last time I saw him, that was his very image. Thank God, I never beheld him when those kind features were cold and rigid—that white neck gashed by his own hand! O Kate! 'tis a sad story. I have not mentioned it for twenty years; but it's a relief to talk of it now. Surely I was not altogether to blame; surely he might have given me time; he need not have been so hasty—so desperate.

'Listen, Kate. I was one of a large family of girls. All my sisters were beautiful; all were vain of their charms. As I grew up, I heard nothing talked about but conquests, and lovers, and captivation. I thought to dazzle and enslave the opposite sex was the noblest aim of woman. Latimer was brought up with us; we called him 'Cousin,' though he was in reality a very distant connection. Poor boy! day by day I could see he was growing more and more attached to me. Latimer always brought me the earliest roses. Latimer helped me with my drawing, and did my commissions, and turned the leaves when I played on the pianoforte, and hung over the instrument when I sang. In short, Latimer was my slave, in body and soul; and the consequence was, Kate, that I cared very little for him. My sisters, to be sure, joked me about my conquest; and I felt, I confess, a proper pride in owning a lover, like the rest; but of real affection for him I had then very little: and I often think, my dear, that we women seldom value devotion such as his till too late. I was not old enough to think seriously of marriage; but Latimer was convinced I should become his wife, and (poor fellow!) made all his arrangements and schemes for the future upon this idea, with a forethought scarcely to be expected from one so young.

'Well, years crept on, and I 'came out,' as you young ladies call it, and was presented at court, and went to balls, and began to make the most of my time, and enjoy life after the manner of my kind. Of course, I was no wiser than my elders. I danced, and smiled, and flirted, as I had seen my sisters do; and the more partners I could refuse, the better I was pleased. One day Cousin Latimer came to me, and spoke out honestly and explicitly. He told me of all his hopes, his misgivings, his future as I had the power to make it, and his love. I was pleased and flattered. I felt I liked Cousin Lattimer better than any one in the world; but there were two things I liked even better than Cousin Latimer; these were power and admiration. Of the former I could obtain as much as I coveted; of the latter I determined to take my fill. We were that night to have a grand ball in the house, and were much occupied in decorating the rooms, and other *preparations, such as* we girls delighted in. I put off Latimer with half promises and vague assurances, which sent him away more in love with me than ever. I was to dance the first quadrille with him. It was an engagement of at least a month's standing, and he had rather wearied me by too often reminding me of it.

'There was a regiment of hussars quartered in our neighborhood, and we were well acquainted with most of the officers. The more so as one of my sisters was engaged to be married to the major, who, by the way,

laid up for months with brain fever; they cut all my hair off; they pinioned me; they did all that skill and science could do, and I recovered. Would to God that I had died! I do not think my head has ever been right since.

'Kate! Kate! would you have such feelings as mine? Should you like to live all your life haunted by one pale face? Would you wish never to enjoy a strain of music, a gleam of sunshine, a single, simple, natural pleasure, because of the phantom? Be warned, my dear, before it is too late. I tell you honestly, I never forgot him; I tell you I never forgave myself. What did I care for any of them, except poor Alphonse—and I only liked Alphonse because he reminded me of the dead. Do you think I was not a reckless woman when I married Sir Guy?

'Do you think I have not been punished and humiliated enough? Heaven forbid, my dear, that your fate should resemble mine! I read your feelings far more plainly than you do yourself. You have a kind, generous, noble heart deeply attached to you; don't be a fool, as I was; don't throw him over for the sake of an empty-headed, flirting, good-for-nothing *roue*, who will forget you in a fortnight. Strong language, Kate, is it not? But think over what I have told you. Good-night, dear. What would I give to yawn as honestly as you do, and to sleep sound once again, as I used to sleep when I was a girl!'

I took my candle, and kissed Lady Scapegrace affectionately as I thanked her, and wished her good-night. It was already late, and my room was quite at the other end of the house. As I sped along, devoutly trusting I should not meet any of the gentlemen on their way to bed, I spied a figure advancing towards me from the end of a long corridor. It was attired in a flowing dressing-gown of crimson silk, with magnificent Turkish slippers, and carried a hand candlestick: much off the perpendicular, as it swayed up the passage in a somewhat devious course. When it caught sight of me, it extended both its arms, regardless of the melted wax with which such a manœuvre bedaubed the wall, and prepared, with many endearing and complimentary expressions, to bar my further progress.

The figure was no less a person than Sir Guy, half tipsy, proceeding from his dressing-room to bed. What to do I knew not. I shuddered at the idea of meeting the Baronet at such an hour, and in so excited a state. I loathed and hated him at all times, and I quite trembled now to face his odious compliments and impertinent *double entendres*. My hunting experience, however, had given me a quick eye to see my way out of a difficulty; and espying a green baize door on my right I rushed through it, and down a flight of stone steps that led I knew not where. Giving a view-hollon that must have startled every light sleeper in the house, Sir Guy followed close in my wake, dropping the silver candlestick with a most alarming clatter. I saw I had not the speed of him to any great extent, so I dodged into the first empty room I came to, and blowing out my light, resolved to lie there *perdue* until my pursuer had overrun the scent.

The manoeuvre answered admirably so far. I heard the enemy swearing volubly as he blundered along the passage, thinking I was still before him; and I now prepared to grope my way back in the dark to my own room. But I had not escaped yet. To my infinite dismay, I heard the voice of gentlemen wishing each other good-night, and proceeding along the passage from the direction of the smoking room. Horror of horrors! a light approached the door of the very room in which I had taken refuge, in another second he would enter—the man would find me in his room. He stopped a moment on the threshold to fire a parting jest at his com-

gone to sleep, the chance of arousing him as I went out, or, more alarming still, the awful possibility of his lying awake all night. When morning dawned, concealment could no longer be preserved, and what to do then? I meditated a bold stroke—to rush from my hiding-place, blow out both the candles before my host had recovered his surprise, and then run for it. There was I *on the eve* of this perilous enterprise. Thrice my courage failed me at the critical moment. The fourth time I think I should have gone, when a knock at the door arrested my attention, and Frank's 'Come in' welcomed a visitor whose voice I well knew to be that of Cousin John. The plot began to thicken. It was impossible to get away now.

'Lovell,' said John, in an unusually grave voice, 'I told you I wanted to speak a word with you, and this is the only time I can make sure of finding you alone.'

Frank was busy huddling his treasures back into the writing-case.

'Drive on, old fellow,' said he, 'there's lots of time; it's not two o'clock yet.'

'Lovell,' proceeded John, 'you are an old friend of mine, and I have a great regard for you, but I have a duty to perform, and I must go through with it. Point-blank, on your honor as a man, I ask you, are you or are you not engaged to be married to Miss Molasses?'

Frank colored, hesitated, looked confused, and then got angry.

'No intimacy can give a right to ask such a question,' he replied, talking very fast and excitedly; 'you take an unwarrantable liberty, both with her and me. Who told you I was going to be married at all? or what business is it of yours whether I am married or not?'

John began to get heated too, but he looked *very determined*.

'I am sorry you should take it thus,' he replied, 'for you force me at once to come to the point. As the nearest relation and natural guardian of my cousin, Miss Coventry, I must ask your intention with regard to that young lady. I have often remarked you paid her great attention, but it was till to-day that I heard your name coupled with hers, and a doubt expressed as to which of the ladies I have mentioned you meant to honor with your preference. I don't want to quarrel with you, Frank,' added John, softening, 'I don't want to mistrust your good feelings or your honor. Perhaps you don't know her as well as I do; perhaps you can't appreciate her value like me. Many men would give away their lives for her—would think no sacrifice too dear at which to purchase her regard. Believe me, Frank, she's worth anything. If you have proposed to her, as I have reason to think you must have done, confide in me. I will smooth all difficulties. I will arrange everything for you both. God knows I love her better than anything on earth; but her happiness is my first consideration, and if she likes you, Frank, she shall marry you.'

Captain Lovell seemed to be of a different opinion. He bit his lip, looking angry and annoyed.

'You go too fast, Mr. Jones,' he replied, very stiffly, 'I have never given the young lady you mention an opportunity of either accepting or refusing me. If ever I am fool enough to marry, I shall take the liberty of selecting my own wife, without consulting your taste; and I really cannot undertake to wed every lively young lady that condescends to flirt with me, merely *pour passer le temps*.

To be Continued.

Mr. Thomas Martin, of the 5th con, Howard, Ont., owns a Suffolk sow, which brought him four litters inside of fifteen months, aggregating 48 pigs.