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Parvitas summi est optimum. — Cicero.

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THE QUADROON GIRL.

The tropical heat of noontide was over, but the air was still sultry and oppressive. A slight breeze had indeed sprung up, but too languid to raise the lids of the drooping flowers, it only whispered to them, perchance in praise of their luxurious grace, and then died again into stillness.

There was but one moving figure to be seen, and it ill accorded with the desolate character of the landscape, for Lucille, the Quadroon girl, was very beautiful, and, clad in the brilliant hues which so well became her, seemed to tread the lonely path by the light of her own loveliness.

It was indeed a dreary scene, for she was approaching one of those extinct volcanoes with which the island of Martinique abounds, and the rugged ground was scarred and darkened by the hot breath which had passed over it. Here and there the masses of gray stone were clothed with the exuberant vegetation of that glowing climate, but for the most part all was bare and black, as though some ancient curse rested upon the spot, and chilled the generous hand of nature.

Lucille seemed little to heed the scene; her large eyes, dark as night, were sadly gazing eastward, and her small head set so proudly on the column-like throat, was bent dejectedly. Occasionally she raised it to reconnoitre, and at last a gleam of pleasure and recognition shot across her face. A stranger would never have dreamed of human habitation in that wild spot, but Lucille's eyes sought out a dark hollow in the rock, and already distinguished within it the stooping form of an aged woman. As she approached, her step quickened, and at last, seemingly in unconquerable impatience, she started forward into the cavern.

"What, Lucille! and hast thou come at last?" said the old woman, "and wilt naught but sorrow ever bring thee to my side? Nay, deny it not, there are tears in thy heart, hanging like thunder rain in the heavens and see, the first touch of my hand has brought the torrent down."

It was true, Lucille had flung herself to the ground in an agony of tears, the violence of her sobs shaking down her hair into a wilderness of darkness round her polished shoulders. Very soon however, like the storm-steps to which the old woman compared them, the large tears ceased to flow, and she looked up.

"Mother, you are right," she said; "Whether by the power of that dark air which all ascribe to you, or whether by the love you bear me, I know not—but you read clearly as ever the secret of my heart, and I dare not, if I would deny it."

"Gabriel has deserted thee?"

"It is so, mother, but oh! I tell me, tell me, at least that my heart is still my own—that he has striven to free it, but cannot."

"Lucille, canst thou hear it? I can tell thee somewhat."

"Oh! mother, there is nothing I could not bear if he but loves me still—did I not tell you long since, when first I heard of him in that wild fever, that I could die content, nay, that I could live, and see his face no more, if but once I heard him say that he loved me?"

"And thou hast that wish?"

"No great wisdom was needed for that prophecy, child," rejoined the other, "with a fondness of tone that came strangely from her thin withered lips. 'Even now, I marvel as I see thee, that he could ever gaze enough on those eyes of thine.'

"Hush! mother, hush!" said Lucille, impatiently, snatching away a sickly look which the old woman was smoothing over her fingers; "you said you had somewhat to tell me, conceal it not, if it concern him or his."

"Thine own fears have sufficiently forewarned thee, my child. The girl had her face in her loosened hair. 'He will marry,' she whispered, at last, as if afraid to give voice to the words. 'But, mother, may he not love me still? Oh! the white woman's eyes may be as blue as our summer heavens, but will she love him as I have done? Will her pale cheek burn as mine, at the sound of his footsteps?—will she toil for him thro' the heat of noon, and watch through the silence of the night? Lucille raised not her head, and her companion, in compassion as it seemed, broke the pause."

"My child, he may love thee yet."

"Oh! thinks, mother, thinks, your words are ever true—now will I cast off the selfishness of this sorrow, and if only he will, sometimes say that he loves me, will he help me as of old?"

"Lucille, what of thy child? he is wont so to fill thy talk, and to-day thou hast told me nothing of him?"

"There was, alas! no shadow of shame on the young girl's cheek as she answered:—'He is well, mother, and fairer than ever; you say that my skin bears scarcely a trace

of the swarthy hue of our people, but his—oh! it is purer than moonlight, our darkness has all fled into his eyes! I would that they had been blue, but he has at least his father's rosy mouth, and clustering golden hair. Did I tell you, mother, that when last Gabriel saw him, he wept?'"

"Thou didst not, child. I am glad for thy sake that the babe is so fair, perchance even yet he may save thee, or even if Gabriel wed this Madeline de Beauvoir, who is doomed by some fate or other to cross thy path in life; even her heart may be touched by the beauty of this child, and knowing the wrongs of our race, she may stoop to save him from poverty, and labor, and set him amongst his father's people. Thou wouldst be a happy mother then, Lucille?"

"I know not that I could grieve aught from her hand," answered the girl, "proudly looking unconsciously so majestic in queenliness of her beauty, that her companion wondered for the hundredth time how Gabriel Delacroix, even with his pride of descent and worldly ambition, could resist its influence."

A moment's thought however, and she sighed deeply. What had availed the charm of that man, or the warmth of that heart?—Did a European ever wed with one of his despised race? and was not Madeline de Beauvoir, whose name rumor had united with that of Gabriel, a daughter of the wealthiest family of all their wealthy oppressors?

Lucille at that moment was saddened by no such sorrowful reflection, her elastic nature had already thrown off for the time the burden of her grief. Of her poverty she thought little; a flower-maker by trade, she could always earn a sufficiency by the exercise of her graceful art, either amongst the luxurious ladies of the island, or by exporting her handiwork to Paris. To her position, sanctioned, alas! by custom amongst our race, there attached little idea of disgrace, and she could have hoped to retain something of her lover's affection, and to bring up her child in greater ease and refinement than she had known herself, she might have been happy. "Mother," she said, after a pause, "it would relieve my heart to look upon the beauty of this white woman, Madeline; I know her father's chateau well, I will take the boy in my arms, and if she is alone, I will even speak to her, and hear the voice that has charmed my Gabriel. She cannot see the child unmoved, for he is fairer than the fairest babe ever cradled beneath their rick roofs."

"Do as thou wilt, my Lucille," replied the old woman fondly, "and," she added, "with a bitterness that seemed far better to afford with her harsh features, 'swoon unto her and her's, if she show thee aught of the over-weening pride of her people.'"

It was a bright burning day with scarcely a breath stirring even through the cool jalousies of the chateau Beauvoir.

The fair Madeline lay languidly on a sofa; the delicacy of her transparent skin was enhanced by the soft, white drapery and rich lace in which she was robed. The room was partially darkened, and on one side of her knelt a servant, who gently agitated the air with a large fan of beautiful eastern workmanship, while on the other, a young girl, who served as a companion to the heiress, was reading to her the last French novel.

Within the shrubbery, and not many paces from the house, Lucille had lain, crouching in the stifling heat, for many hours; anxiety to accomplish his object, and the fear of detection having induced her to take up her station much earlier than was necessary.

The excessive heat, and the want of nourishment, had made her very faint, though her child, whom she had fed, and tucked to sleep in her arms, lay still and peaceful as a waxen image of infancy.

She had dressed herself with unusual care, and bore in a light basket on her arm, some of the choicest specimens of her skill—delicate night-blossoming buds, and gorgeous tropical flowers, interspersed with wonderful accuracy and grace.

At length her child awoke, and she began to fear from his restlessness, she should be obliged, for that day at least, to give up her plan, when from the lofty door of the chateau, Madeline de Beauvoir, attended by a lady and gentleman, entered the grounds. Lucille's eyes dilated, and her bosom heaved, but no! it was not he, she saw that at a glance, and her gaze was again riveted on the lady. Something like disdain flashed across her beautiful face as she looked, and then faded into an expression of respect and congratulation; truth to tell, with all the adjuncts of wealth and luxury around her, could not bear a moment's comparison with the dark-eyed Quadroon, and Lucille felt this instinctively.

A while she paused irresolute, then crossing her right, slowly advanced, with her stately tread to where Madeline had seated herself; but her tongue failed her, and she

could only silently display her gracefully-fashioned flowers.

The lady looked on coldly, and made no answer to her companion's warm comments on the rare beauty of the mother and child. Her gaze was directed to the proffered flower-basket, and after turning over its contents with a careless hand, she glanced at the Quadroon.

"Your own work, I suppose? Ah! I would have purchased some, for they are really very well done, but you have nothing all white, I see, and these gaudy colours badly suit my complexion."

"Strange, is it not?" she continued turning languidly to her companion, "that the absence of refinement in these people should be so perceptible even in their dress—they all prefer those glaring colors."

"Nay, be answered quickly, but with a little care to subdue his tones as she had displayed, "if they have all the gorgeous beauty of this splendid creature, they should wear no other hues."

Lucille stood motionless, only her curling lip betraying that she was conscious of their words. "Would the white magnolia, or the silver lotus, please the Lady Madeline?" she asked in her soft rich voice.

"Yes; either would do," replied the lady. "You may make me a wreath of the white magnolia, I think, and bring it here by next week—not later," she added, with a half smile, and waving her hand in token of dismissal. But the young girl by her side had started up—"Oh! Madeline, the child, have you noticed it? I never saw anything half so lovely! what magnificent eyes! may I not hold him a moment," she continued, with a pretty beseeching look at Lucille, and already taking one tiny hand in hers."

The mother's face softened, though she held the boy still closer to her bosom.

Therese, of what are you dreaming? exclaimed Madeline, angrily, rising from her seat. "I forbid you to touch the child," every other girl, of common modesty, shrinks from these low-born creatures, and the offspring of their depravity; and she swept haughtily into the chateau with her companions, the abashed girl giving a deprecating glance at Lucille.

The Quadroon followed Madeline's retreating steps with a look of fiery disdain, and long after the party had disappeared, still she stood, transfixed to the spot, every muscle quivering with suppressed anger.

Her boy's soft fingers wandered in wonder over her averted face, recalled her thoughts, and she turned away with a step of yet sturdier pride than the lady.

Gain the next, two women sat together, in the cavern of the rock. Of sought pure and holy was their talk, far as the hours sped by, the beautiful face of the younger woman was transformed to something like the bitterness and cruel rage of the elder. Her occupation accorded little with the expression of her features, for she was skillfully fashioning, into all living beauty, the snowy flowers and swelling buds of the white magnolia.

"Are you sure that it cannot fall, mother?" she whispered, after a long pause.

"As sure as that the sun will rise to-morrow."

"But you have not tried it," she added, with a creeping shudder.

For all answer the old woman tottered across the room, and uppling the folds of a bright-hued shawl which lay heaped upon the floor, displayed the motionless form of a small mountain goat. It seemed to have laid down and died there without a struggle, so peaceful was its attitude. The girl shuddered violently as her companion dragged her body across the cave, and precipitated it over the hill side.

"No son shall she live to bear him," muttered the old woman, fiercely, as she took the wreath from the girl's hand; then drawing a phial from her bosom, she poured into each open cup and half-closed bud, a few drops of clear white liquid.

The following day was one of rare festivity at the Chateau Beauvoir. A grand fete, at which the heiress, in her bridal array, was to appear for the last time as Madeline Beauvoir, had been planned; for the next morning was to see her the bride of Gabriel Delacroix. As she sat in her chamber, robing for the ball, she was told that a Quadroon girl waited without, asking to see her.

"Ah! my white magnolia wreath," she said gaily, "it will be more becoming than this tangle of pearls; bring the girl here, Therese, quickly." With her own hands, Lucille placed the clustering flowers amid the lady's hair, and then retired with a deep reverence. "Through the open arched windows she watched the bride clad, threading with her graceful mazes of the dance, her cheek flushed, her blue eyes sparkling.

Still she watched on, and prayed with clenched hands, until she saw the lady's cheek blanch, and her hand seek her brow,

with a troubled gesture. Then she laughed wildly, and sped away from the perfumed air and the brilliant light of that festive scene. Even as she fled, the bride had fallen to the earth, and was borne to her room, silent and motionless. Only when they uncovered her pale bosom, and loosened her shining hair, her hand, in obedience to some strange spell, sought the flowers on her brow, and none could remove them.

The next sun rose upon her, a bride indeed in her bridal array, fair and flower-crowned, but cold, voiceless, and still forever.

MUSICAL MICE AT A CONCERT.—An Exciter paper, in repeating a concert last week at Colyton, mentions the following singular circumstance:—Soon after Miss Hay had commenced her first song, the party occupying the first seat saw a mouse sauntering leisurely up and down close to the skirting of the platform on which she was singing. At the conclusion of the ballad the mouse vanished, re-appeared, bringing with it a companion, when the next song commenced. At the end of the song the two mice retreated to their hole, but made their appearance on the boards when the singing was again renewed. Eventually six or seven mice came out regularly with every song, and retired when the music ceased. Whilst the melodious tone filled the apartment, all attempts to drive the mice away were vain. Our contemporary concludes this marvellous story by referring any persons who may doubt it to persons of Colyton, whom he names, and who were in the foremost seat.

MORE RIOTING.—Works suspended near Saint Croix.—On Tuesday morning, a report was made to the Government, that the Contractor on the St. Croix Section of the Windsor Branch, had been compelled to discontinue all his men and to temporarily suspend operations. It appears that there had been a fight between six Scotchmen and seven Irishmen, somewhere near to Martin's. The latter having got the worst of it, raised a gang of 50, and were only prevented from committing the good example set them, nearer the Capital, by a promise of somebody in authority that the Scotchmen should be discharged. On hearing of the state of things Mr. Cameron, however, with great good sense and firmness, discharged all hands—suspended operations, and reported the facts to the Government.—[Halifax Chronicle.]

CRUELTY OF GREY BRIGADES.—THE process resorted to by the robbers for discovering the whereabouts of those hidden repositories was a cruel but effectual one. A kettle full of oil was set on the fire. If the unfortunate woman, who protested that she was ignorant where her husband had hid his treasure, relented in view of the coming torture, she was not molested. But if she persisted in her obstinacy, or really did not know where it was, the scalded fluid was poured upon her neck, breast, and body. Five or six were subjected to this inhuman treatment; others were merely beaten; and one, whom we saw, boasted that though the ruffians stabbed her in several places, she had not betrayed her husband's trust.—[Boston's Modern Greece.]

Hon. Charles Sumner has been re-elected to the U. S. Senate by the Massachusetts Legislature, by a vote of 333 to 12.

Hugh Miller, the eminent geologist, was found dead in his bedroom at Edinburgh, shot through the heart. For some time he is said to have kept a loaded revolver in his room, an attempt having been made to break into his museum. It is supposed his death was accidental.

The Vermont State House was entirely consumed by fire on the 7th inst. The building was begun in 1833, and finished in 1837, and cost \$132,077.

UNCLE BENJAMIN'S SERMON.—Not many hours ago, I heard Uncle Benjamin discussing the sinners to his son, who was complaining of pressure. "Rely upon it, Sammy," said the old man, as he leaned on his staff, with his gray locks flowing in the morning breeze, "murmuring pays no bills." I have been an observer many times, these fifty years, and I never saw a man helped out a hole by cursing his horse. Be as quiet as you can, for nothing will grow under a moving harrow, and discontent harrows the mind. Matters are bad, I acknowledge, but no ulcer is better for being fingered. The more you grow the poorer you grow. Repining at losses is only putting pepper into a sore eye. Crops will fail in all soils, and we may be thankful we have not famine.—Besides, I always took notice that whenever I felt a rod pretty smartly it was as much as to say, 'here is something which you have got to learn.'

Sammy, do not forget that your schooling is not over yet, although you have a wife and two children."

A SHAW'S VICAR.—A story has been told of a certain vicar who several years ago lived at a village a few miles from London. One day upon a particular occasion, he sold some of the principal inhabitants of the place, and one of the men there, and one of the company, thinking the vicar would not be remunerative to the landlord, suggested that he might charge an extra... of wine in the bill. "That," said the landlord, "might have been done, but the vicar puts every cork in his pocket as a check to the account."

A HOME TRUTH.—Flogging school boys may make them smart, but then it is in the wrong place. If a boy has intellect, he will get along without the cane. If, on the contrary, he is dull and stupid, flogging him over the head will make him not so ambitious to overcome algebra, as to overcome the schoolmaster.

"You have only yourself to blame," said a married friend to an old bachelor. "True," replied he; "but you cannot tell what a difficult task I find it."

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