

you, there was but little of the dove in her washing blue eyes, in the arch curving of her scarlet lip, or the faint dilation of a nostril as she drew the glow seen against the light through a white sea-shell.

Violet's nose was of the haughty Spanish type, and there was a Capitan air about this rosy bluntness, when the captain held her, to walk through the world with her head up, and scorn the earth, which only occurred when Silver wrought himself to such a pitch of despotism as to forbid her skating on the lake when the ice was rotten, or refused to let her ride "Thunderer," or declined to settle annuities on two or three dozen new *protégés*, or otherwise misadmonished himself after like atrocious ways.

Where occur the lines, so happy in their simplicity:

"Peace charmed the street beneath her feet,
And honor charmed the air,
And all a-strid looked kind on her,
And called her good as fair!"

They describe my sweet Violet, my nineteen year old syph, with the sinless brow and the radiant young eyes, better than if I fled with a diamond pen over an MS. of lily leaves from "morn till dowy eve." Rest you content, fair air, she was altogether lovely, and so worthy your regard as the heroine of this unpretending Canadian Tale, though I shall not linger to give, like Olivia, "divers schedules of her beauty."

She looked at the moon, where she walked in fullest beauty amongst her starry host, and as the virginal light bathed her and her dumb companions, they looked like some lovely group of enchanted creatures suddenly turned to forms of pearl by the potent wave of a gen's hand.

Heaven alone knows what sublime thoughts made the girl's countenance so angelic, as her shining eyes fell from star to star, her lips parted in breathless delight, and a lofty awe radiating from her perfect face as though she watched the flight of seraph hosts from one starry Heaven to another, and through the perfumed air caught far-off strains of celestial choirs.

"Fair," she said, coming out of her reverie, and patting the velvet skin of the snowy doe with her rosy palm, "we like the moonlight sometimes, don't we? when there are no ridiculous Charlies near to talk nonsense and disturb our meditations. Ah, mention an angel, and hear the flutter of her wings! Speak of Charlie and smell his cigar!"

She looked at the approaching form, emerging from the open French window of the dining-room, with a glance curiously compounded of archness and a subtle shade of something not tangible enough to be called melancholy in her great violet eyes.

He came up to the group by the fountain, and, with a droll air of chagrin, spat himself on the marble margin.

"There is something the matter, Charlie!" said Violet Silver, looking at him meditatively; "it's nothing about that, is it?"

"It just is!" said Charlie, ruefully; "the governors have been hammer and tongs at it ever since you left the table!" and Charlie groaned, and ran his taper fingers desperately through his crisp brown hair.

"Well," said Violet with spirit, "I suppose I am to be consulted in the affair. I wonder at papa, and a great flush swept over face and neck, and stained the pretty hand lying on Fairy's neck.

"You'd wonder twice as much if you had been there," remarked Charlie gloomily. "We're to be married on next Christmas Day, my young lady. I shall be twenty-one then, you know!"

"What?" cried Violet, then was silent, her bloom heaving, her eyes flaming, her cheeks like scarlet roses.

"Perfectly true!" said Charlie. "I'm sure I'm as sorry as ever I can be, Violet. It's awfully hard on us both, and—and on Daisy too, you know."

"What did papa say?" demanded Violet imperiously. "If you are my cousin, I think you are a coward, Charlie Silver!"

"Uncle Arnold held out as long as he could for letting us arrange matters ourselves, but you know my father, Violet! He put on one of those iron looks and uncle gave in at length," replied Charlie dismally; "and you needn't call a fellow names. I'd like very much to see you tell my father that you wouldn't do as he wished."

"Oh!" said Violet, stretching out her round white arm like a young sybil, her nostrils dilating as though there were the breath of coming war in the air, "I am not his daughter, and I am not afraid. If you promise faithfully that you will marry Daisy Leighton, you shall, and, yes, Uncle Aurelius shall consent to it, so surely as my name is Violet Silver!"

"Of course I'll promise," said Master Charlie patronizingly. "She's a good little thing, and I'm really very fond of her, or else, Violet, I wouldn't have made any objection to our engagement. But a fellow can't help these things, you know."

"Thank you!" said Violet with superb disdain, and elevating her Spanish nose towards the stars, "you needn't apologize! I can go into a convent or something as soon as you are married, and

With my hand on my bosom, my head on my knee,
Sing, willow, willow, willow."

"Oh, come," said Charlie, much aggrieved, "what between you and my father, I wish I was dead or a sailor. I'm as fond of you as though you were my sister, and you turn me into ridicule without mercy. If I see a head

taller, and had a black moustache like a monkey-skin muff, like some people, it would be different! Though I'm sure I'm driven to such a state that I don't care if I never were to have one!" he added recklessly.

Violet turned very, very pale in the moonlight. She sank down on the edge of the fountain beside her cousin, and taking his hand between her soft palms, laid her proud cheek against it.

"Charlie, dear," she said softly, "you're very fond of me, aren't you?"

"Yes!" said Charlie, considerably mollified, "I'm fonder of you than any one, except Daisy, in the world."

"Then you must promise never, never, never to mention the person you know of until I give you leave."

"I promise!" said Charlie Silver; "but, Violet, do you think it's just the thing to meet him the way you do. Nobody knows the fellow."

Violet turned to cross Fairy, and so hid her bright blush from Charlie.

"Never mind, Charlie," she said, with a little quiver in her sweet, young voice; "you know I wouldn't do anything wrong?"

"Of course I know that."

"Very well. Go in and play chess with Daisy, and if they ask you where I am don't tell. Oh, Charlie, you don't know how much depends on papa, and especially Uncle Aurelius suspecting nothing!"

"I don't like to," said Charlie majestically, "but as I must waive a principle and keep it, I suppose I must."

"Certainly," said Violet abstractedly, rising from her seat by the fountain, and laying her hand on Fairy's neck, while the fawn gambolled before them, shaking airy peals of silver from her tinkling bells, she tripped away through the moonlight, while Charlie returned to the villa.

He pushed back the foamy lace draperies of the drawing-room window, and stood at the shoulder of a tiny creature, with a zig-zag-like face and great melancholy dark eyes, who was sitting on a low ottoman, gazing blankly at the opposite wall, her slender brown hands clasped idly on a heap of glowing roses with which she had been filling a Sevres vase on a marble stand at her side. She was in deep mourning, and looked a pathetic, dark little phantom in the glow and brightness of the pretty room. She heard Charlie's step, and a slight quiver ran through her slender frame, and a dusky rose crept into her lovely face, but she did not turn until he touched her arm very lightly. Then she slowly moved her eyes to his handsome young face. He was very like Violet, only that the brow was hardly so wide, or the outline of the chin at once so firm and delicate. It was a pleasant, lovable face, however, frank and bright as the face of the young should be, but a shadow darkened it as Daisy Leighton's eyes met his. He drew back a little from her, her face was so full of fire, such a tempest of jealous rage lightened in her dilated eyes. She rose, letting the roses fall in a mass to the carpet.

She flung out her little hand, as though appealing against him to the Unseen.

"Coward," she said between her little white teeth, "and traitor! I saw you with her by the fountain."

Charlie's dark blue eyes assumed a look of mingled anger and distress.

"Upon my word, Daisy!" he said in a low tone, "I am quite tired of these fits of jealousy, and directed against Violet, too. What a silly puss you are!"

She looked at him with a singular smile, her dark face paling to the very lips, and at this stage of the scene a shadow fell across the carpet, and Aurelius Silver stood before them, a stern looking man, with a face such as one sees on an old Roman medal, and thick masses of sparkling silver hair clustering round his lofty brow. One could imagine him that Roman who gave his son, fresh from a glorious victory, to the sword of the executioner. His eagle eyes took in the agitation of Charlie and Daisy at a glance, but with a piercing look at them, he turned and walked silently away.

Afraid as he was of his terrible father, Charlie had considerable spirit and an affectionate nature. Daisy's emotion distressed him beyond expression, for he dearly loved the fairy little being, and going up to her he took her hand.

"Dearest Daisy," he said gently, "listen to me for one moment." But she tore the little brown fingers from his grasp, and with an inarticulate cry of the very excess of rage, sprang through the open window and fled out into the moonlight.

Charlie's first thought was of Violet and his promise to her.

"I hope she won't stumble upon them!" he thought, and darted out, to overtake and soothe her, but she had disappeared.

Charlie paused, at a loss how to act, and as he looked out across the moonlit lawn, it seemed as though a faint cry came to his ears from the direction of the lake, and at the same moment Violet came swiftly towards him, tall and white as a spirit, in her fluttering, misty dress.

CHAPTER II.

"AU REVOIR!"

Aurelius Silver stalked in his rage out into the moonlight, and turned his steps across the lawn, his whole soul filled with intensest wrath, born of the suggestive little scene he had just witnessed between his son and the paid companion of his niece. Just at the point when success had crowned his plans, it was sudden-

ly to find his airy fabric of Hope dashed to the ground by the glancing wing of the bright little creature who had flitted so inopportunistly across his path. "Why," he said to himself, as his black shadow swiftly traversed the pearly light, bathing the emerald slope of the lawn, "I could crush her with a touch! And yet I foresee an exhausting conflict with her as with a scorpion in the desert, and perhaps as hopeless. Charlie, too! Who would have dreamt it! How indomitable the lad's eyes were as they met mine for that second. A touch of my own nature there!"

A grim smile darkened rather than brightened his majestic face, and he closed his iron lips until the fine curves of the resolute mouth were lost in one firm bar, as unyielding as death itself. "She must be got rid of," he counted silently. "I have never yielded a jot of my will yet to mortal, and it would be strange, indeed, if the folly of a boy and girl should turn me aside from the purpose of my life—that of joining the house and fortune of my brother with my own."

As he pondered, he turned aside from the narrow path, edged with low, aromatic cedars, which ran down to a little grove of willows overlooking the lake, in order that in this quiet spot he might think undisturbed. He was no longer angry, that is, he had taken his rage by the throat and planted his foot upon it after the fashion he had followed with Fate itself in his busy life. He was even a little amused with himself for his brief passion. "One would almost imagine it a thing of consequence," he said to himself; "the poor young fools!" and pushing aside the screen of drooping willow boughs, he was about stepping out on the little beach, glistening golden by the diamond tide, when, as though stung by an adder, he drew back into the impenetrable shade of the clustering leaves, amid which his face gleamed as though hewn from ivory. The glowing monster of his fierce anger was gathering for a spring, and for an instant he was paralyzed by the intensity of his rage. Had it been otherwise, he would immediately have revealed himself, for his haughty spirit would have spurned the idea of spying on the actions of others.

A light canoe trembled on the edge of the tide, partially shaded by the willows, and in it he saw a man, just engaged in pushing it out from the shore. As he looked it freed itself from the tiny beach, and tossed on the long, purple voiceless swell of the lake. The man turned a dark handsome face, with lustrous eyes to the shore.

"Good-bye, my love!" he said in a low and cautious voice, and Violet Silver kissed both her white hands to him, her deep eyes radiant, her rosy lips quivering yet asleep.

"Au revoir! not good-bye," she whispered. "until Christmas Eve. Go! I thought I heard footsteps!"

She turned and fled past Aurelius, her golden hair, loosened and flowing, drifting against his broad chest as he stood aside in the shadow, her light dress touching his hand like a passing vapor.

The man, with a long powerful sweep of his paddle, darted his canoe along the shore, and, turning a sharp curve, bristling with gigantic pines, was instantly lost to sight.

Aurelius drew a heavy breath, which almost seemed to tear the steel muscles of his vast chest, and with the port of a Caesar defied by rebellious Helots, parted the screen of willows and stepped out on the fairy beach, baring his lofty brow as he did so to the freshening wind, which was stealing across the lake, leaving pearly footprints of faintest foam as it came. A complication had arisen which, in one glance, he saw could hardly fail of ruining his hopes unless, indeed, his action was prompt, vigorous and—unsparing. And of all men who ever tore the golden prize from the hand of Fortune, Aurelius Silver knew how to be unsparing to others and to himself. He had never done a generous deed, far less a dishonorable one. Some natures resemble masses of grim rock, threaded with veins of gold, but to the cold walls of which no tender parasite clings, no vine of beauty connecting them with the warmth and sunshine of human life. He neither gave nor expected sympathy. He had his virtues of the high Roman sort. He was honorable, he was temperate, he was courageous. The hidden fire which lurks in man, as in nature, was there, but it neither brightened his life; or that of others.

"So!" he said; "Violet also!"

The expression of his face boded but little good towards the girl. She was the only creature he permitted himself to love, and for the very reason that in a certain cold way she was dear to him, he absolutely hated her in the moment in which he found her young spirit had freed itself from the shackles of his will.

He turned to the left, and walked about a hundred paces along the narrow beach, until the villa hung about him like a pearl set in moss. The strip of sand dwindled here to a mere golden thread, from which sprang the green settlements of the steep bank, or rather hill, on which stood the house of Arnold Silver, and the lake, suddenly deep, lay a depth of jet, dappled with silver at its foot.

Involuntarily Aurelius Silver glanced up at the villa. Against the lights in the drawing-room, beyond the rose-garden, the fountain sprang, a pillar of diamond spray, streaked with ruby, and against it again, a little black form rushing down the bank, phantom-like in the moonlight, a night of hair flowing out as she seemed to hurl herself down the steep bank towards the very spot where he stood.

It was Daisy Leighton. She paused for a brief second, as though poised in air almost above his head, her eyes seeming to roll tides of fire from the vellor of her lustrous hair. Her hands stretched out, as though she fled from some pursuing horror.

Then, with a wild cry, throwing for a second her ghastly little face and flaming eyes up towards the silvery glories of the placid heavens, she sprang from the banks into the jolly depths at Aurelius Silver's feet, her long hair floated like a mass of ebon-hued drift for a second in the water, and then all was as before, save that widening rings of silver chased each other out across the lake, and drove its waters lapping in sudden life over the bait of sand.

A mighty shudder ran through the vast frame of Aurelius Silver. He was a strong swimmer; what ailed him that even now he made no effort to save the distraught child from the grave she had rushed to?

A voice spoke to his soul, "Oh, man, why trouble thyself? Fate has crushed one obstacle in thy path. Make her evil thy good."

Was there a voice abroad, sighing through the pines and across the purple, silver-crested swells of the lake, sighing over the sudden fall of him who had walked as a god amongst men from the high throne of his boasted honor? Were the stars changed to orbs of fire and blood as his burning eyes turned towards them? With his silver hair lifting itself stiffly from his head, with a hand of fire grasping his heart, with eyes that saw and ears that heard not, Aurelius Silver turned and fled by the path by which he came.

And silence fell upon the spot.

CHAPTER III.

"LORD, KEEP MY MEMORY GREEN!"

An old stone house standing just outside Montreal, back from the highway and flanked with great pines, old and weird looking, like those in Gustave Doré's picture of the "Hewing of the Cedars of the Temple." The house itself square, massive, low-browed, its hewn walls of granite, with that faint suggestion of rose and aqua-marine flowing through the stone which renders some of those old buildings so mellow and picturesque. The windows small and formal, the chimneys standing up against the sky, cowed and hooded like hermits on a mountain top, and from the great eaves giant lances of diamond, the handiwork of the fairy armorer King Frost, hanging like the spears of Titans in some enchanted land. A carriage drive sweeping its hospitable arms from great gates of sombre bronze to the stone steps, guarded on either side by a stone lion couchant, of an amiable, not to say benevolent aspect. A hall-door of polished oak, and over it a richly carved stone, bearing date of nearly a century before.

This was the home of Aurelius Silver, which, with Arnold, his brother, and his niece Violet, he occupied during the winter months, spending his summers at their villa in the Upper Province. Thus the two families were together during the whole year.

Within, on the ground floor, a long, wide room, entered by great arched doors of deep hued oak, and lighted by a prim row of windows set so deeply in the walls that the sills, cushioned and draped with ruby-hued velvet, formed the easiest lounging places possible. The walls were panelled with oak, richly brown and lustrous, tossing to and fro in their shining depths the scarlet leopards and writhings of the great fire burning on the hearth, lonely logs like prostrate pillars of carbuncle, glowing ruddily and filling the room with a rosy illumination. The ceiling was painted with a quaint, geometrically-hued picture of Jove banqueting, squiored by a golden-haired Ganymede, while his eagles plumed their great pinions at his feet.

A mighty bust of Spanish oak, a mass of rare carving, and antique enough in appearance to have been taken from the "rich, dim city" which Merlin waded into existence with his wand, bore an array of silver plate, rich, rare and old, catching the firelight on frosted wreath and grinning griffin head, the crest of the family, with a fine effect. For the rest, a great dining-table and vast chairs of oak and ruby velvet, a grim portrait or two with the Silver coat of features on the wall, and by one of the windows a fragrant heap of ice-cream under a light, and Violet, in a blue cashmere dress, twining wreaths of the same, a pencil of a slight stricture across her bright head and leaving its hair behind it in that golden tulle, straying off and losing itself in the dark oak panel from which that exquisite head was thrown out like a portrait wrought in rose and pearl and gold upon a shield of bronze.

The girl's face was changed in some subtle way since that night we found her by the fountain. A shade more pensive, a thought less radiant, the eyes deeper in expression, the lips parting less readily in laughter and in speech; and the same change, intensified a hundredfold, repeated in Charlie Silver's face, who, sitting on the cushioned sill by which her chair was placed, watched her in silence as her long, rosy fingers twined the emerald sprays into a long, foamy wreath, stocked here and there with the fire of scarlet berries, dug from beneath the white drifts in the woods.

His face was changed indescribably. The features were sharper, the glance of the eye loftier, if shadowed, the lines of the mouth and chin resolute and decided. The face which had been like Violet's had developed into a more gracious resemblance to Aurelius Silver, a likeness which had retained what the finest and noblest in the