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## BEYOND!

Tremblingly sweet the branches cling to each other,  
Into the distance melt they away like a shade,  
While the still earth serenely waits for the spring-time,  
In Quaker robes arrayed.  
O human heart, thirstily drink the glory  
That hides in the shadows, that lights the brown slopes,  
Can you far-roofing, blue gleaming above thee  
Bound "all" thy hopes?

Loving and close the grasp of our hand by our brothers,  
Never to fade seems the light in eyes that we love;  
Tender and sweet are words lips the dearest oft utter,  
Their loving to prove:  
Is it enough, O heart, art thou at rest?  
Is there no need, starry night? none, sweet dawn, as thou streakest  
The east? Aye, a "need" heart! and only beyond  
Wilt thou find what thou seekest.

## THE POOR GENTLEMAN.

### CHAPTER II.

For a while her large dreamy eyes were vaguely fixed, as if gazing into space; at intervals a smile played around her mouth, and her lips moved as if talking with a friend. Occasionally her drooping eyelids closed entirely; but the lashes quickly reopened, only to fall more heavily than before, till at last a profound sleep or intense reverie seemed to get possession of her mind and body.

But did she sleep? There is no doubt that her spirit watched and was happy: for a pleasant expression constantly played over her features, and, if sometimes it became serious, the joyous look quickly returned with all its radiance. She had long been plunged by this happy dream into complete forgetfulness of real life, when a noise of wheels and the neigh of a horse was heard at the gateway, disturbing the silence of Grinselhof. Still the maiden was not aroused.

The old calche returned from the city, drew up near the stable, and the farmer and his wife ran out to salute their master and put up the horse. While they were thus engaged, Monsieur De Vlierbeck got out of the vehicle and spoke to them kindly, but in a voice so full of sadness that both looked at him with astonishment. In fact, the gravity of this singular person never abandoned him even in his affable moods; but at that moment his physiognomy indicated a degree of intense depression which was by no means habitual. He seemed altogether worn out by fatigue, and his eyes, which were commonly vivacious drooped, dull and languishing, beneath their heavy lids.

The horse was quickly put in the stable, and the young lackey, who had already divested himself of his livery, took several baskets and packets from vehicle, carried them into the farmhouse and placed them on the table of the ante chamber.

"And now, Master John," said De Vlierbeck, approaching the farmer, "I shall have need of you. There will be to-morrow at Grinselhof, Monsieur De necker and his nephew dine here."

The farmer, perfectly stupefied by the announcement and scarcely able to believe his own ears, looked at his own master with staring eyes and gaping mouth, and, after a moment's hesitation, stammered forth—

"That large, rich gentleman, sir, who sits near you every Sunday at high mass, 'The same, John, is there any thing surprising in it?'"

"And young Monsieur Gustave, who spoke to mademoiselle in the Church yard when church was over!"

"The same!"

"Oh, sir, they are such rich people! They have bought all the land around Echelpoel. They have at least ten horses in the stable at their chateau, without counting those they have in town. Their carriage is silver from top to bottom."

"I know it; and it is exactly on that account that I desire to receive them in a becoming manner. You must be ready; your wife and your son also. I shall rise to-morrow morning very early. You will willingly lend a hand to help me, won't you?"

"I Certainly, certainly, sir; a word from you is enough. I am always happy to be able to serve you in any way."

"Thank you for your kindness, John. We understand one another, my worthy fellow; and so farewell till to-morrow." Monsieur De Vlierbeck entered the

farmhouse, gave some orders to the young man in relation to the things he had taken from the vehicle, and, passing through the screening grove, walked on to Grinselhof.

As soon as he out of the farmer's sight his physiognomy assumed a more serene expression, and there was a smile on his lips as he cast his eyes around in search of some one in the solitude of the garden. At a turn of the path his eyes fell suddenly on the sleeping girl. How beautiful she was in her calm repose! The golden twilight covered her with its bright reflection and threw a rosy tint on every thing about her. Thick curls strayed in beautiful disorder over her cheeks, and snowy flowers, shaken from the catalpa's branches by the evening breeze, had fallen around her in profusion. She still dreamed, and the happy smile yet rested on her features. De Vlierbeck gazed earnestly at his sleeping child, and raised his eyes to heaven as he said, tremulously,—

"Thanks, Almighty Father! she is happy! Let my martyrdom be prolonged; but may all my sufferings render thee compassionate for her!"

After this short and ardent ejaculation he threw himself into a chair, leaned his arm carefully on the table, and, resting his hand on it, remained still as a statue. For a long time he watched his sleeping child, while his face seemed to reflect each emotion that flitted across the delicate features of the maiden. Suddenly a modest blush spread her brow, and her lips began to articulate. The old gentleman watched her narrowly, and, although she had not spoken in connected sentences, he caught one of those stray words which often betoken what is passing in a dreamer's mind.

"Custave! She dreams of Gustave. May God be propitious to us! Ah, yes, my child," exclaimed her father, "open thy heart to hope! Dream! dream; for who knows what is in store for us?"

Yet, no!—let us not destroy these happy moments by cold reality! Sleep, sleep! let thy soul enjoy the heavenly enchantment of love which it is awaking?"

Monsieur De Vlierbeck continued for a while his quiet observation of the sleeper, and then, rising, passed behind her chair and imprinted a long kiss on her forehead.

Still half-dreaming, the sleeper slowly opened her eyes; and the moment she perceived who had awakened her, she sprang into her father's arms with a bound, and, hanging round his neck, overwhelmed him with questions and kisses.

Vlierbeck gently disengaged himself from his daughter's embrace, as he remarked, in a tone of raillery,—

"It seems altogether unnecessary, Lenora, to inquire what new beauties you have discovered in Vondel's 'Lucifer.' You have not had time, I take it for granted, to begin the comparison between this masterpiece of our native tongue and Milton's 'Paradise Lost?'"

"Ah? father," murmured Lenora, "my mind is indeed strangely troubled. I do not know what is the matter with me; I cannot even read with attention."

"Come, Lenora, my child, don't be sad. Sit down; I have something of importance to tell you. You do not know why I went to town to day, do you? It was because we are to have company to dinner to-morrow?"

Lenora gazed at her father with an earnest questioning look.

"It is Monsieur Denecker," continued he;—the wealthy merchant you know who sits near me at Church and lives at the chateau of Echelpoel."

"Oh, yes? I remember him, father; he always speaks so kindly, and never fails to help me from the carriage when we go to Church."

"But your eyes ask, I see, Lenora, whether he is coming alone. Another person will accompany him, my girl?"

"Gustave!" exclaimed the maiden, involuntarily and blushing.

"Exactly? Gustave will be here," replied Monsieur De Vlierbeck, "Don't tremble on that account, Lenora; and don't become frightened because your innocent heart may find itself opening to the dawn of new sensations. Between us my child, there can be no secret that my love will not discover."

His daughter's eyes looked inquiringly into his own, as if asking an explanation of the enigma. But all of a sudden as if a ray darted unexpectedly into her soul, she threw her arms around the old man's neck and hid her face in his bosom.

"Oh, father! beloved father," murmured she, "your kindness is unbounded. For some moments the old gentleman did not put aside the affectionate caresses of his child: but by degrees his expression became gloomy; tears started into his eyes, and he said, in broken tones,—

"Lenora, whatever may happen to us in life, thou wilt always love thy father thus, wilt thou not?"

"Always, always, father!"

"Lenora, my child," continued he, with a sigh, "thy tender affection is my only recompense and happiness here below: never deprive my soul of its consolation!"

The sad tone in which these words were uttered touched the maiden's heart so deeply that she took her father's hand, without saying a syllable, and wept in silence with her hand in his bosom.

For a long time they remained thus motionless, absorbed by a feeling which was neither joy nor sorrow but seemed to acquire its power and mastery by the mingling of those opposite sentiments, Monsieur De Vlierbeck's expression was the first to change. His features became severe as he bent his head downwards reproachfully. In truth, the strange words that started the tears into his daughter's eyes had excited the reflecting in his own mind that another person was, perhaps, about to share his Lenora's and probably to separate him from her forever. He was ready for every sacrifice, were it even infinitely greater, provided it contributed to the happiness of his child; yet the very idea of separation caused his heart to bleed every pore.

By degrees he stifled this selfish anxiety, and, striving to control himself, raised his daughter with a kiss.

"Come, Lenora," said he, "be gay again! Isn't it a happy thing that our heart can sometimes get into the shade after they have been to much in the sunshine? Let us go into the house. We have many arrangements to make in order to receive our guest becomingly."

Some hours afterward Monsieur De Vlierbeck might have been seen seated in the principal saloon of Grinselhof, near a little lamp, with his elbows on the table. The apartment was dark and dreary, for the feeble rushlight illuminated but a single spot and cast the distant and lofty ceiling into vague obscurity. The flickering flame threw long and sombre shadows over the wall, while a line of old portraits in the panel seemed to fix their stern and immovable eyes on the table. Amid the gloom nothing came out with distinctness but the calm and noble face of the poor old gentleman, who sat there absorbed in his reflections, fixed as a statue.

At length, raised from his chair and cautiously walking on tiptoe to the end of the room, he stopped and listened at the closed door. "She sleeps," said he, in a low voice; and, raised his eyes to heaven, added, with a sigh, "may God protect her rest!" Then, returning to the table, he took the lamp, and, opening a large safe which was imbedded in the wall, he went down on his knees and drew forth some napkins and a tablecloth, which he unfolded carefully to see whether they were torn or stained. As he refolded the articles one after the other, a smile betokened that he was pleased with his examination. Rising from his task, he went back to the table, from which he took a piece of buckskin and whiting. Mashing the latter with a knife-handle, he began to rub and polish several silver forks and spoons which were in the basket. The salt-cellar and other small articles of table service, which were mostly of the same metal, were all subjected to a similar process, and soon glittered brightly in the feeble lamplight.

While he was thus engaged in this strange work, the soul of the poor man was busy with a thousand conflicting thoughts and recollections. He was constantly muttering to himself; and many a tear escaped from his lids as

he dreamed over the past and repeated the names of the loved and lost!

"Poor brother!" ejaculated he; "but one man alone in the world knows what I have done for thee, and yet a man accuses me of bad faith and ingratitude! And thou, poor brother, art wandering in the icy solitudes of America a pray perhaps to sickness and suffering while for months no kindly look is fixed upon thee in that wilderness where thou earnest thy miserable wages! Son of a noble race! thou hast become a slave to the stranger, and thy toil serves amass the fortunes which others are to enjoy. My love for thee has made me suffer martyrdom; but, as God is my judge, my affection has remained entire,—untouched! May thy soul, O brother, feel this aspiration of mine even in the isolation where thou art suffering; and may the consciousness of my love be a balm for thy misery!"

The poor gentleman was absorbed for some time in painful meditation; but after a while his dream seemed over, and he betook himself again to work. He placed all the silver utensils side by side on the table, and, after carefully counting and examining them, resumed his soliloquy:—

"Six forks? eight spoons? We shall be four at table: it will be necessary to be careful; else it will easily be seen something is wanting. I think, however it will do. I must give very precise instructions to John's wife, for she is a clever woman, and knows what she is about!"

As he uttered the last words he replaced the silver in the basket and locked it in the safe; after which he took the lamp, and, leaving the saloon on tiptoe, descended through a little door into a large vaulted cellar. Here he hunted about for a considerable time amid stacks of empty bottles, and at last succeeded in finding what he was in search of; but his face became extremely pale as he drew three bottles from the sand.

"Good heavens! only three bottles!" exclaimed he; three bottles of wine and Monsieur Denecker is such a connoisseur of vintages? What shall I do if they ask for more when these three bottles are empty! I have it? I do not drink; and Lenora drinks very little; so there will be two bottles for Monsieur Denecker and one for his nephew. But even at the worst, what is the use of anxiety. Let luck settle it."

With this De Vlierbeck went into the cellar, where he gathered from the walls a quantity of cobwebs, which he wound artistically around the bottles and covered with dust and sand.

On reaching the saloon he went to work with paste paper to mend some rents in the tapestry on the wall, and then, after passing nearly half an hour in brushing nearly half an hour in brushing his clothes and disguising their threadbare spots with water and ink, he came back to the table and made preparations for a task which was still more singular than any he had hitherto been engaged in. Taking from the drawer a silk thread, an awl, and a bit of wax, he put his boot on his knees and began to mend the rents in the leather with the skill of a cobbler? It will readily be supposed that this odd occupation stirred a variety of emotions in the heart of the poor gentleman; violent twitches and spasms passed over his face; his cheeks became red, then deadly pale; till last, yielding to a passionate impulse, he cut the silk, threw it on the table, and, with his hand stretched towards the portraits, cried out, with struggling passion,—

"Yes, behold me.—behold me,—ye whose noble blood runs in my veins! You, brave captain, who, fighting at the side of Egmont, at St. Quentin, gave your life for your country,—you, statesman and ambassador, who after the battle of Pavia, rendered such eminent services to the Emperor Charles,—you, benefactor of your race, who endowed so many hospitals and churches,—you, proud bishop, who, as a priest and scholar, defended us bravely your faith and your God,—behold me, all of you, not only

(TO BE CONTINUED.)