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OUR LITTLE QUEEN.

Could you have seen the violets
That blossomed in her eyes,
Could you have kissed the golden hair
And drank those holy sighs,
You would have been her little queen
As joyfully as I.
Content to dress your little queen
And let the world go by.
Could you have seen those violets
Hide in their graves of snow,
Drawn all that gold along your hand
While she lay smiling so,
Oh! you would tread this weary earth
As lightly as I.
Content to grasp her little grave
And let the world go by.
—Overland Monthly.

HECLA.

When nature made the twins, Lucy and Sara Knight, she blundered in haste or carelessness, or was guilty of a practical joke upon highly respectable and unimaginative parents. It was patent to mother, nurse and visitors that she had misplaced the infant souls, by the time the children were six months old. When they were grown, it was a standing jest in a community just then addicted to "Pinafore," that the factious mother of all had "mixed these maidens up."

Their twinning seemed almost, even to casual acquaintances. Not a feature or trick of tone or manner betrayed it. Lucy was a tall brunette and Juvenotte in build. The curl of the short upper lip was pride incarnate, her deep, gray eyes had black shadows in their depths; she wore her head aloft and walked as queens should; her contralto voice had a sub-tone of repressed passion, so inconsistent with the true propriety of her speech, that people were surprised and provoked when they could elicit nothing else. She looked like a Medea whose very calms were deadly, and portended tempest. Her family knew her as an amiable, plucky horse, her friends as the meekest and shyest of social lady figures, conscientious to a fault, patient to a miracle.

"You have no more character than a bowl of vanilla junket," said Sara, derisively, to her one morning, as they talked over a party they had attended the previous evening. Most people spoke of Lucy as "Sara's sister," despite her superiority in size, and the fact that she had preceded her twin into the world by an hour. The lesser ruled the larger, as Titania ruled Peaseod and Colweb. Sara was the fairest of blondes, and petite. Her hair would have been flaxen but for the golden glints upon the waves; her eyes were wide and pure blue; her lips cherry ripe; her cheeks had the violet flush, at once soft and clear, one reveal over in the heart of Katherine Merrimrose. From sunny politeness to twinkling tones, she was alive and electric—the sauciest, daintiest, dandiest spirit that ever turned a lover's head and shocked a diuana.

While Lucy sewed now upon a long white seam, her exquisitely modeled hand drawing the thread out in long lengths with rhythmic regularity, her sister and sovereign, perched upon the head of a lounge close by, twittered like a sun bleached linnet.

"Milk and water sauce tartare by comparison," she continued, nipping and pecking with her pink pins a lady's waistband from a bowlful upon Lucy's washstand.

Dan Hyde had said, then, an hour before, and the present thine sprang upon this circumstance.

"Why, I just couldn't keep it to myself another minute. I am would murder me if he knew I had let it out. He charged me not to breathe a word to anybody—least of all to you—you ungrateful, non-susceptible alabaster slab! He said you're still, pale angel! I don't believe angels' veins run red, glycerine. Lucy Knight! if you don't blush, or prick your finger, or break your needle, or do something abominably like that, I shall fall upon you and tear you limb from limb! I very believe this flower has more human feeling than you. You take the news that one of the finest fellows in town loves you to distraction as coolly as if I had said: 'Lucy, do you know that water lilies have yellow centers?'"

Lucy did not lift her eyes, or interrupt the setting of minute stitches of uniform length. "I do not see that there is anything for me to say," she answered in a deep monotone that never more than hinted at leasted feeling. "You are very kind, I am sure, to tell me all the pleasant things Mr. Hyde said to me of me, and he was very kind to say them."

In wrath that she would not wait for words to convey it, Sara flung the matted lily at her. It hit Lucy's cheek and fell upon her "white work." She picked it up, looked at it as if to see whether or not it could be repaired, and apparently deciding that it was hopelessly injured, dropped it into the waste paper basket, and went on setting minute stitches. Sara swung her toe against a chair and upset it.

"I don't see what he sees in such a construction of starch and plaster to care for," she jerked out. "It did not seem so preposterous when he was telling me the three servatry—and the hand was playing soft love music—how he had loved you for three years, and could never get near enough to you to intimate the truth. He looked so miserable, and tragic and true that I couldn't help saying what a perfectly lovely disposition you have, and how devoted I am to you, and that nothing would please me more than to have him for a brother. There! I am glad of it!"

Lucy had run the point of the needle under her nail. Her brows contracted and her whitening lips were pressed closely together as she dipped the wounded member in the bowl of water and then stanching the blood with her handkerchief.

"It does bleed, doesn't it?" remarked Sara, cool and malicious. "That does surprise me somewhat."

In the next second she collapsed into an unexpected burst of blue foulard and flaxen fluff upon the "white work," and, burying her fearful face in Lucy's dress, begged her to "forgive her for all the despicably abominable things she had said."

Lucy fondled her silently, as she might a hurt kitten or frightened rabbit.

"I know you don't mean all you say, dear," she said, with unmoved gentleness. "And it is awkwardness, not ingratitude, that makes me seem ungracious. I am not quick of speech as you are. Or of wit, either, for that matter. You must bear with what can't be cured."

"And you will be kind to Dan when he asks you to marry him, won't you?" pleaded the other, with wet eyes close together. "He will at the first opportunity. He said so. And he is so doubtful of your feelings that a slight rebuff will drive him away from the subject. You see, Lucy, you never had an offer and don't understand how much encouragement a modest man needs in such circumstances. You must do your part, or you'll lose him to a dead certainty."

A wave of color, so faint that Sara could not guess how it scorched the dark, still face, flickered over Lucy's forehead.

"Since he did not mean for you to speak of it to any one, wouldn't it be honorable for us to let the matter drop here and try not to

think of it again?" she said, in her level tones, as she picked up the white work and gave it a little shake to get out the creases Sara's weight had laid flat.

Sara stared at her in intense scorn.

"If I say another word I'll be sorry for it," she uttered in desperate composure, and flung herself out of the room.

At 9 o'clock that evening the girls were in the drawing room. Amity was completely restored, and Lucy was playing a diligently correct accompaniment to Sara's singing when Dan Hyde entered. Both sisters saw him and his courteous gesture of entreaty that they should finish the song. Sara smiled with her eyes and nodded, warbling spiritedly all the while. Grace Lucy's fingers were as obedient as in stich setting. Time and tune were accurate. Her playing was like her voice in speaking—mechanical, yet holding vague intimations of an imprisoned soul.

The brilliant little blonde had an insinuating, and a bit of swift telegraphy went on behind Lucy's back. Neither of the respondents thought of the mirror, in which the dance above was repeated.

Within fifteen minutes after the three sat down together Dan had asked Sara for a book he had lent her, and she had down upon stairs to get it before Lucy could offer to do the errand.

The elder sister sat down again on the opposite side of the fire from the visitor, with an inarticulate murmur of embarrassment he misook for dissatisfaction. Her face was as fine and cool as a marble Minerva's. She leaned back in her chair, her beautiful hands overlapping one another at the wrist, and relieved artistically by the maroon of her gown. She looked altogether composed and a trifle weary. Heavy rain had come on with the night and in the dead, birdless silence succeeding Sara's flight they heard the wind whip the wind driven foam against wall and window.

Dan Hyde might not be a confident lover, but he was not the faint heart that never wins. He led off tolerantly well, and the girls were surprised and provoked when they could elicit nothing else. She looked like a Medea whose very calms were deadly, and portended tempest. Her family knew her as an amiable, plucky horse, her friends as the meekest and shyest of social lady figures, conscientious to a fault, patient to a miracle.

"Very," responded Lucy, dryly.

"It makes one long for a home of his own," was the woeer's next advance.

Lucy's face paled and stiffened. She gazed steadily into the ruddy palpitations of the grate, and could not have spoken to save her soul.

At that exact instant an ignited lump of coal rattled from the top of the hearth into the fender, and both stooped for the tongue. Dan secured them, picked up the fragments, and then, without a word, crossed the rug, and took a chair beside Lucy's. Another clatter caught his eye to the unlucky fire. The tongue had slipped their mooring, and lay kicking wildly on the hearth. As quickly as her sister could have moved Lucy sprang forward, set them up, and crossing the rug in her turn, took a straight backed reception chair, the whole width of the hearth distant from her sister.

Dan's face glowed like the hottest coals, to which Lucy's eyes went back with a show of tranquil interest, then it paled to the hue of cold ashes.

"I would be a concealed fool if I did not understand why you did that, Miss Knight," he said, huskily. "I came here to-night to say something to you which I see you are not willing to hear. I have too much respect for you to torment you with an unwelcome suit. Good night, Lucy! God bless you!"

He took up the impassive fingers that lay like ice in his. With such an effort as he was making to speak he forced three words through her throat:

"I am sorry!"

"I know you are sorry for my disappointment. You have nothing to reproach yourself with. You never loved me to a proposal. You are all noble, all maidenly. Good-by again!"

It took Sara sixty-seven minutes by the clock to look for the borrowed volume, and then she presented herself below stairs, empty handed. Lucy sat alone by the dying fire. The wind howled fendishly, and hissing drops of hail found their way down the chimney.

"Where is Dan?" Sara stopped just within the door to ejaculate.

"I went away soon after you left us," said Lucy, indifferently, or dreamily.

"Lucy Knight! if you have sent him off, I will never forgive you! I prepared you for what he had to say!"

If Lucy ever sneered, there was a sneer now upon her proud mouth. She dragged herself to her feet, which felt dead and queer. Sitting so long in the straight backed chair had cramped her limbs. But she walked firmly across the room to shut the piano.

"Perhaps you prepared me a little too well!" she said. "We will not speak of it again. Mr. Hyde has nothing to complain of, nor have I. How is it raining? I hope the ashes are locked all over the house."

A year later there was a wedding at which Dan Hyde was the bridegroom. Among the guests, when the ceremony was over, came the two sisters. Sara leaned upon the arm of her lately wedded husband, as arch and piquant as ever. Lucy was in the escort of a perfect fortune holder, who was slightly afraid of her.

"I congratulate you, Mr. Hyde," she said, in her low, rich monotone. Looking him in the eyes, she could not say less. She never wasted words.

A New England man whom his best friend described as a "volcano shut up in an iceberg," once spoke to me of his "agency of incommunicableness."

Let those whose channels of speech are deep and free, connecting, without obstruction, with the heart, thank God for a blessing received and a sorrow withheld.

"That girl should have been christened Hecla!" said Dan Hyde's quick sighted, warm hearted wife to him after the bridal call paid to them by the sisters.

Dan laughed lightly. He was a sensible, practical fellow and very much in love with his second choice.

"The volcano is the work of your imagination, my pet. Or, if you are in the right, life is too short to spend in throwing a thousand feet of ice upon the chance of finding fire at the bottom."—Marion Harland in New York Ledger.

Dogs as Draught Animals.

THE BORDER MEXICANS.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HAPPY PEASANTS OF THE SOUTHWEST.

Realizing Rousseau's Definition of Freedom—Simple Lives That Have a Great Deal of Unvarnished Happiness in Them. A Look at the Better Side of the Grass.

Along a zone of our southwest border, from the Gulf of California to Corpus Christi, on the Texas coast, is found a type of being that is almost an anomaly, even among our own cosmopolitan classes. The border Mexican, or "Greasier," has no nation, yet he is distinctly local. He is the evolution of the arid and sun-baked belt characterized by flora and fauna as acrimonious and as shaggy as himself and best exemplified by the cactus, the coyote and the burro. You cannot see nature in its nakedness in this creation, for he is an adaptation that rises superior to adversity. You will find him picturesque and, when better known, not all bad. This Mexican is far below the nation's representative, yet he is not the degraded poor or serf of the land. He is rather what the poem has become in the two generations he has enjoyed the freedom of our government, if not the nation's representative, he is generally admitted to be the result of a fusion for some centuries of the Spaniard with that mild type of semi-civilized Indian of the Cortez conquests, but is nearer the Spaniard, whose beautiful language, further softened into a dialect, he still retains. This may be due to laziness, but is more probably from the liquid movement of Indian speech peculiar to some of the southern tribes, shown by the present language of the Pimas and Maricopas of southern Arizona.

WANT NOT THE UNATTAINABLE.

The Mexicans are the happiest of contented creatures, and, though poverty is their universal heritage, they have no wants. Jean Jacques Rousseau must have been among a similar peasant class in Italy when he wrote truthfully that "He only is free who wants nothing beyond what he can get and does harmlessly as he pleases." There are two classes of Mexican peasants, the Labradores and the Rancheros. The former are the milder, simpler people found sprinkled along the small canyons and valleys on little plots of bottom land adjacent and irrigated by simple or community ditches called acequias, which lead from the stream to the fields, the lower level will permit them finally to wander over the bottom. They bring no arroyos, build no dams, arches or culverts, and use only nature's level, water, to give the grade required for their canals. In engineering ability they are as far behind the Aztecs, who once inhabited this valley, as are the present Egyptians behind their ancestors under Menes.

A plot of a few acres supports an entire family of a dozen, exclusive of dogs—maize, melons and barley; later a crop of frijoles (beans) and calabazas (Mexican beans and pumpkins). A little pepper and onions and their commissary is complete. The Rancheros are more or less cattle, ponies, sheep or goats, are less local in their tastes and are more hardy, so that it is among them that is sometimes found that outlaw element that has made "Greasier" the synonym for beast and hell.

The character of the border Mexican is a mixture of the Spaniard and the Indian. This character is partly the result of a traditional sentiment—a spirit of adventurous resistance to tyranny. On the Mexican side a man who evades their outrageous taxes and customs is a hero; one killed in an attempt to do so, a martyr. The government only is the robber. The men are the horsemen of the firm yet easy border, always using the instrument of torture, the bonds, or Spanish bit, in the control of their ponies. Many are expert in tossing the riata and some handle a revolver well. A Pueblo scene is very characteristic. Adobe dwellings, thatched roofs, and a few beneath which are the stone jars left unglazed for cooling water, and the stone hand mill for grinding the corn for corn cakes, called "tortillas." The men are always ready to compare with that of India. The agricultural methods are those described in the Bible. Hay is cut with a hoe, sometimes a hand knife or a sickle; a bunch whose forks embrace the proper angle of the plow, and the oxen are yoked by lashing a pole to the base of their horns.

AT THE BALL.

A fiesta is truly the most beautiful of a "baile," or dance. If it be fall and the night air be cool you will find this the best place to "fajal." Everything has been removed from the house but a row of "sillas" (chairs and boxes), placed across the room, the room is lighted by a few beds of glowing coals placed at intervals on the freshly swept, hard packed earth floor, by a few candles committed to brackets of adobe, and the music is furnished by a violin, an accordion and one or more harps. There are no hard cards, but the habitué can tell you in advance what the programme will be. The dancing is of a simple, rhythmic, and redolent of three steps in galopa, a polka and may be a western square dance or two.

There is no director or empire gowns, on corsage bouquets, none of the traditional Spanish dress of a woman. This is a folded dignity; double-breasted, placed over the head, the longer end falling forward is carried loosely over the bosom as high as the throat and crosses the other fold on the left shoulder, leaving only an oval of face visible from brow to chin. The women retain a Spanish fondness for black and also the Indian love of bright colors. The men are indifferent to dress except so far as to having a broad, light felt sombrero, and a scarf, or sash, of bright colored wool or silk about their waist. To a Mexican girl dancing is instinct. Their accentuation is so perfect, their movements so yielding and full of muscular grace, that to watch with one on an earth floor, where the friction is something frightful, is not impossible. Let those who very dancing as a vice of civilization, an unnatural pleasure created for a sensation, come and learn of these poetic savages the rhythm of motion. For they are poetic; there is a perfume of romance in the songs found in the poems "fajal," a sensuous Spanish that our language cannot render. I recall once being at a "baile," where in the interval between the dances I asked one of the young ladies to give me a Mexican song, which she did to my accompaniment on the guitar. It was exquisitely soft, though I could only catch enough of the Spanish to know that its theme was love. When the piece was finished she wanted us to return the courtesy by a song in English. We hastened to avow with the usual frankness in such cases, that we could not sing, but the girl evidently did not believe us, and would sing no more for us in spite of entreaty.—Philadelphia Times.

Johnnie's Whistle.

Mrs. Brown (grabbing him)—I thought I told you not to blow that dreadful whistle!

Little Johnnie—I know you did, ma. But I was only just trying to see whether it would blow!

Mrs. Brown—I thought I told you not to blow that dreadful whistle!

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Mrs. Brown—I thought I told you not to blow that dreadful whistle!

Little Johnnie—I know you did, ma. But I was only just trying to see whether it would blow!

Mrs. Brown—I thought I told you not to blow that dreadful whistle!

THEY WERE HORNETS.

A Tale Which Shows That to Know It All Is Not Always to Be Wise.

We were waiting on the depot platform in a new town in Alabama, and as the dozen of wasps' nest hanging on a bush across the track and He pointed it out as a wasp's nest, but a short, solid man, who had a head like a cannon ball and a jaw denoting great firmness of character, as once replied:

"I beg your pardon, sir, but you have made the very common mistake of classing the wasps with the hornets. That is a hornet's nest."

"And I beg your pardon, sir," protested the solid man, "that is a wasp's nest. You are right about the wasp being a peaceful insect, and I think I will take that nest along for a souvenir. They say they are a sure cure for quinine."

"Do you know a hornet from a wasp?" "I should remark!"

"Well, when you get through with that nest I want you to tell me whether it was occupied by hornets or wasps. Gentlemen, look out for yourselves!"

He started for the woods and we followed, and when we reached a safe distance and looked back, the man with the iron jaw was just cutting off the limb which held the nest. He held it up and called to us to come and see it, but his call was followed by a yell which would have done credit to a Comanche warrior with a double Adam's apple in his throat. The yell was followed by a series of hoos, whoops, exclamations and ejaculations, and these were accompanied by gymnastics of an intricate character. He jumped, dodged, twisted and cartwheeled, and finally started down the track on a gallop. Seventy minutes later, and just as the train whistled, he came out of the woods, dead lame, one eye shut, his nose as big as his fist, and his head bare.

"Hornets or wasps?" queried the planter.

"Hornets, by thunder!" groaned the victim as he hurried to get his valise.—New York Sun.

Honesty.

A story is told of a young man who was recently married to the daughter of a wealthy merchant. The groom didn't have a cent, but he was honest. He was so honest that he wouldn't even prevaricate in the marriage ceremony. He was repeating what the minister read:

"With all my worldly goods I thee endow," read the minister.

"With all thy worldly goods I me endow," repeated the honest—Chicago Tribune.

Where He Drew the Line.

Paterfamilias—No, John, I have no objection to having you for a son-in-law, but I think a young man should not marry before he is 21.

John—Yes, I am only 18, but remember, sir, Miss Julia is 27, and I could never think of marrying a woman of 30.—Munson's Weekly.

The Man Was Out.

"Jerush," said a resident of West Spruce street to the obedient hired girl, "if anybody asks for me this evening, just tell 'em I'm out proper angle and they'll return."

"Yes, sir," said the girl, as she bowed herself out of the drawing room.

Five minutes later the door bell rang. "Is Mr. So-and-So in?" asked the caller.

"No, he's out," replied the knowing domestic.

"Sorry. When will he be in?" "Can't tell; probably he won't return to-night."

"Sorry. I'm going to leave the city tomorrow for a couple of months and I had a bill I wanted to pay him before I went away."

"But he's out," exclaimed the head of the house, as he bounded out into the vestibule.

"Yes, you are," said the man who wanted to pay the bill. "You've gone away to stay over night, or probably you'll be away two or three days. Maybe you've gone to Minnesota to look after some property, or perhaps you have started for Florida to spend the rest of the winter. No, my friend, you are not in, so I can't pay you the money. I'll wait till you come home. Good night."

Then the man walked down the steps, informing himself that if there was anything he wanted it was a liar.—Philadelphia North American.

Accoutred For.

Patient—Doctor, I am troubled with deafness. How do you account for it?

Doctor—Which ear?

Patient—Right.

Doctor—Do you shave at a barber's?

Patient—Yes.

Doctor—That settles it.—Boston Herald.

Where Men Are Scarce.

Mother—Well, Gertrude, how do you like Vasar?

Gertrude—It reminds me of a certain island off Martha's Vineyard.

Mother—What island is that?

Gertrude—No Man's Land.—Boston Herald.

Tact in Conversation.

Novice (his first ball)—What shall I talk to my partner about?

Veteran—Her beauty.

Novice—But suppose she has none!

Veteran—Then about the ugliness of the other girls.—Boston Budget.

Usually the Case.

Miss Edith—There is that Mr. Simsonby, I don't know just what to make of him.

Edith's Father—Oh, you'll make a husband of him, I reckon.—Detroit Free Press.

Looking for News.

F—Find anything in the paper?

G—No; I was just glancing over it to see if anybody I knew had been born.—From the German, in Texas Sifting.

Proof of the Blade.

Customer—Don't you call that a dull razor?

Barber—It can't be berry dull, sah. I cut from a man's coat, vest and shirt with it last night.—Boston Herald.

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