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turned to the table and Miss Buchanan set the lamp down on it. Miss Gorner put two or three more logs on the open fire, which blazed on the hearth.

"Isn't it a little colder?" she remarked almost apologetically.

Miss Buchanan stuck her feet out toward the fire with a sharp, half-nervous, half-defiant little laugh.

"Yes," she said. "It got colder when those steps went by us, Mina," she continued slowly. "We might as well admit the facts in the case. We can do that to each other without any reserve. Thank goodness, we are neither of us of the weak-nerved kind. I don't mean to believe in ghosts till I have them forced on me. Even then, I don't propose to flatter their odious self-concept by getting frightened over them. You don't feel afraid, do you, Mina?"

Miss Gorner declared, without too much enthusiasm over the fact, that she did not. Her companion certainly did not seem to be. But had she been scared to death she would have made the best bluff possible at courage.

"Did you notice anything peculiar about that tread?" she asked. The two girls had drawn close to the fire, and the blazing logs threw a ruddy glare on them, while the rest of the room seemed plunged in deeper shadow.

"No," replied Miss Gorner, "except you couldn't see what made the tread."

Her companion's absolute lack of humor often afforded Miss Buchanan much innocent amusement. Restraining herself to a swift smile over Miss Gorner's acute perception, in having remarked the invisibility of the late pedestrian, she said impressively: "I noted two things. If this is a ghost, Mina, and we are going to have the privilege of studying it, I shall make the most of the opportunity. Well, then! First, I noticed the long interval between the sound of the footfalls, and supposed that this was only the dignified slowness inherent in perambulating spooks. Then I remarked that the footfalls were all on the same side!"

"Well?" said Miss Gorner. "Well, that shows that it is a one-legged ghost!" cried Miss Buchanan. "Now, that may lead to his discovery. There may be some reason why a one-legged man should haunt this house."

"It may be a lady," suggested the other.

"Oh," exclaimed Miss Buchanan a little impatiently at this want of proper sympathy with her analysis of the ghost. "It may be a centipede; but whatever it is, it only uses one leg, and there must be something in that. A one-legged lady ghost seems the height of vulgarity. I don't believe a real nice woman, if she were a ghost with only one leg, would go thumping round on it at all hours of the night."

The next morning Miss Buchanan, having cornered her landlord in the woodshed, where he was more loquacious than in his wife's presence, asked him nonchalantly: "Was there ever a one-legged person connected with this house? Or with the family, Mr. Paine?"

Farmer Paine looked somewhat surprised at the question. He shifted his cud from his left to his right cheek, pulled down a log or two from the woodpile in a halting, uncertain way, and finally found voice.

"Ef you'd a-seen that air front porch in war times I reckon you'd a-thought there was some one-legged fellers connected with the house—nd one-arm fellers, too. Right smart of 'em both. They'd fight round here 'nd then be lugged in ter be amputated. Should say there was a one-legged pusson connected with this house," he repeated, easing another log out of the woodpile. "Five-hundred one-legged pussons."

Miss Buchanan paused for a moment, dazed by the number of eligibles as one-legged ghosts. Then she asked: "Wasn't there some one of them, or some other one-legged person, especially connected with the house?"

"Now jes' you tell me, ma'am, why you ask that air question?" retorted Farmer Paine. He stopped his shuffling about and log-hauling, and looked at his lady boarder, his keen, gray eye fully unlimbered.

"Why, because this thing that walks around the place is one-legged," replied Miss Buchanan bluntly. "Of course, the one-legged kind are no worse than the two-legged ones, I suppose," she added, smiling. "I only thought this might help to identify it."

Farmer Paine looked at the young

woman in awe and admiration. She was actually getting acquainted with the ghost. Then he spoke with slow emphasis.

"I declare to goodness ef you ain't the fust to find that out. It jes' throws light on this walking critter. There was one soldier that what you say makes me think of. He was a Yank as was brought in on that porch o' mine senseless, 'nd they took his leg off 'fore he came to. He was madder'n a March hare when he found his leg gone, 'cause he said there warn't no need o' cuttin' it off. He cussed awful," said Farmer Paine meditatively, "nd swore ef he died he'd jes' harnt the place. 'Nd he did die, 'nd it's him as walks; jest out o' cussedness," he added viciously. "I didn't take his ole leg off. 'Nd here he's ben worryin' me 'nd the family 'gone twenty-five year, 'nd queer-in' the place for summer boarders. Ef you ain't cute to get on to the cuss!"

He betook himself off to let Mrs. Paine hear the news. As for Miss Buchanan, having gone so far toward establishing the presence of a ghost as to put a tag on him, it was hardly possible to still flout at the existence of such disembodied wanderers. But ghost or no ghost, she was not going to let it frighten her. No such victory as that for him.

The young woman worked out quite a theory about the one-legged ghost, and explained it to Miss Gorner. "He does this thing for spite," she said. "He was furious with old Paine for letting his leg be taken off, and is doing his best to annoy the family and anybody who may be staying here. It is a petty spirit of revenge, and shows what a narrow-minded, mean thing he is. But, Mina, he's not going to drive me away or frighten me either, unless he has more tricks up his sleeve than I think."

The action of the ghost, a few days after this, confirmed Miss Buchanan in her view of his character and strengthened her determination not to be routed by him. The new activity to which their "brother-boarder" betook himself was to open the bureau drawers and then violently slam them in. This seemed more puerile than terrifying; in fact, conduct hardly dignified in a martial wraith who had deposited a leg on the altar of his country.

"I don't believe he was a Union soldier," cried Miss Buchanan indignantly on one occasion when the ghost had wanted in some noisy three-drawer exercises on the bureau. "That might excuse his spite against Mr. Paine, but it makes his conduct toward a New England woman and a foreigner simply contemptible."

The ghost continued to promenade the hall, slam the bureau drawers and rock the beds. Apparently, this was his whole gamut of accomplishments. What vexed Miss Buchanan most was the bed-rocking, because it kept her awake when she really needed the sleep. As an outlet for her indignant feelings she used to indulge in the most contemptuous disparagement of the ghost.

"It must make him feel mean to know that we simply despise him, and aren't a bit scared by his silly little tricks. I can't imagine a greater insult to any self-respecting ghost. When he becomes convinced that he can't drive us away, or even frighten us, he will stomp back to his—well, wherever he stays," she said to Miss Gorner.

"But perhaps he will do w—"

"Worse things?" replied Miss Buchanan. "I don't believe he can, poor, limited spook! And if he can I want to force his hand. When he has played his trump card, Mina, and doesn't take the trick, he will get out. Mark my words."

About a fortnight later, Miss Gorner was obliged to go to Chicago. She was very loathe to leave her companion alone; or, to speak more by the card, with such unsubstantial company. But there was hardly any choice in the matter, for her presence in Chicago was necessary. Miss Buchanan affected perfect willingness to be left unsupported on the field.

While Miss Gorner was away, the ghost seemed to lose interest. By a natural movement of human vanity, Miss Buchanan concluded that he felt it was time lost to waste his energies on her. It must have been Mina that he hoped to scan.

One day she heard Mrs. Paine speaking with her husband about some visit that seemed to be on the tapis. On inquiry, she learned that Mrs. Paine's people, ten miles away, across the river, were to celebrate some family anniversary with