

## THE CYNIC'S PRIZE NOVELISTS.

No. 1.

## EVA HEAD.

A NAUGHTIGAL ROMANCE OF BEAUTY, BLOOD, AND BOOTY.

(Continued.)

## CHAP. VII.

At these cruel words, Eva, scarcely able to believe that one for whom she was willing to sacrifice so much, could offer so little in exchange, was about to faint, but, fortunately, recollecting in season that this would be the third time she had been so feeble within a week, she decided that second thoughts were best, and—didn't.

Remembering, too, at the same time, that her worthy progenitor,—A. Head, of New Orleans,—was, to use his own expression, “a man of many rocks,”—by which he was mysteriously supposed to allude to the amount of greenbacks at his credit in the Bank,—Eva once more lifted a tearful eye to the despairing Carrajo, and sobbed betwixt her tears,—

“’Tis passing strange, my own; I own, thou art not rich; yet, what of that? My father,—alas! shall I ever see him more,—is rich as mud, with which, when but a little little child, such pies of dirt I made, and thought ’twas glory! We have but to ask to get a cheque!”

“Cheque, indeed,” laughed Schwartz to himself scornfully; “’twill be *check mate* if my worthy master mentions marriage!”

Carrajo, however, too deeply interested in the words Eva had just spoken, to pay any attention to the paltry jesting of Schwartz, placed his finger on his nose and pondered: “’Twas a ticklish question,”—for should he take the fair Eva at her word, and risk his fate, there were numerous contingencies to be taken into consideration. “Her father might not be so rich as she had represented, and then?” . . . “And supposing her story to be true, the ‘dear father’ might not ‘come down with the stamps,’ and then?” . . . “Eva herself, too, though a Southerner by birth, was also a Northerner by education,—she might repudiate the Union, and then?” . . . “Not only this, but there were several little incidents in his, (Carrajo’s,) career,—such as shooting this man, and stabbing that,—which the sheriff of the district might object to, on principle, and then?” . . . “Why, it would be a most *ex-aspirating noosesance* to be led to the halter in place of the altar!”

For several seconds Carrajo reasoned thus with himself, unable to decide, but

“Cupid flies where folly lies,”

and at last, turning towards the impatient Eva, he clasped her in his arms, and signified to her his intention of taking her for better or for worse. Then summoning Schwartz, who had improved the “shining hour” by endeavouring to see through the keyhole, which Carrajo had thoughtfully stopped with cotton wool, he bade his lieutenant prepare for the journey, giving him strict instructions to lay in a good supply of whiskey,—(no *Prim Spaniard*, was he, but right loyal in his love of *Bourbon*),—and to have everything in readiness to leave for New York by the 5.15 Express.

Suddenly a thought struck him with diabolical precision: Supposing that things should not turn out as well as anticipated,—“supposing this,”—thought Carrajo,—“it would be better there were no witnesses left of our union,” and in “that case I must make away with Schwartz and Sara Jane;” and having thus satisfactorily settled this trifling difficulty, he turned to the blushing Eva, and, in his most dulcet tones, asked her “wedder she would wed him at once?”

“At once!” coyly murmured the unresisting girl; “thou art hasty.”

“Be not rash,” urged Schwartz, who had concealed himself in a small recess of the wall where the clock stood, in order, as he explained, to be on hand “in the nick of time.”

“*Rash* ham I?” thundered Carrajo, “I will make a *rasher* of thee, thou pig-headed cur, and all thy cunning scarce shall save thy bacon. Get thee gone, and when thou returnest bring with thee Sara Jane. At the sepulchral hour of twelve thou wilt wed me to this lady!”

“But ’twill not be legal,” objected Eva, as Schwartz retired. “The *match* will savour more of *Lucifer* than grace; besides, thy man is not a priest.”

“Legal!” replied Carrajo, as he pressed the not unwilling Eva still closer to him, “you are all *le gal*! I want; and as to your objection that Schwartz is not a minister, calm thy fears, for, with a view to this ceremony, within the last five minutes

HE HAS TAKEN ORDERS!!”

## CHAP. VIII.

“Drowned! Drowned!”—*Hamlet*.

With the license of a novelist, (prices two and three dollars, as per advertisement,) we will pass over the ensuing twenty-four hours, during which time Eva Head, by becoming Mrs. C., has entered into the Marriage State,—the only one in the Union,—which Death alone can Reconstruct.\*

All preparations had been made for their departure for New York, and every little detail had been attended to: all that now remained was for Carrajo to devise some means of effectually disposing of Schwartz and Sara Jane,—a mere trifle, of course, to a man so familiar with scenes of violence and death, as was the noted chief of the Flei-Hunters of the West.

The question was not what to do, but how to do it! Ropes, Laudanum, Strychnine, 40-rod Whiskey, Dead-shot Worm Candy, Pain Killer, Carratraca, Plantagenet, a *critique* from the *Daily News*,—all these and sundry other deadly and mysterious methods of destruction he revolved, (figuratively,) in his brain; but, none of these things being within his grasp, they were, of course, like the late President’s chance of being re-elected, “far from ’Andy.”

Strolling through the grounds attached to his abode, a bright thought,—as bright thoughts will occasionally,—struck him.

“Ah,” thought he, unconsciously parodying the old proverb, “Where there’s a *well* there’s a way.”

Accustomed always to prompt action, Carrajo no sooner felt the inspiration than he acted upon it, and, returning to the house, he called loudly for Schwartz, who,—like the blind kitten that, in the ignorance of bliss, toys with the fatal stone, which cruel and uncatlike boys have attached to its youthful and unsophisticated neck,—was sleeping the sleep of the just,—just within the door.

“Thou knowest the old well at the foot of the hill?” asked Carrajo.

“I know it well,” replied Schwartz.

“Lead me thither, then,” was the command of his chief: “I have much to say to thee, and would be out of ear-shot of the house.”

In silence they reached the brink, and, guiding his master carefully to a seat on the coping, Schwartz seated himself by his side.

’Twas a glorious night; in the language of the poet “not a leaf stirred,” and it contrasted strangely with the *frame* of mind in which we can *picture* Carrajo to have been.

One—two—three—Hush! Again that mysterious sound, four—five—six—Hush!!

Ah, Schwartz! ill-fared it with thee that thou didst turn thy head to see what meant this strange interruption, for with a sudden thrust Carrajo has sent thee headlong down the well; and that hollow sound,—that dull thud,—and the swaying of the rope which hangs from the rusty pin, tells but too

\* The author is willing to treat for the sole and only use of this sentiment at wedding breakfasts, or other mournful festivities.