

sun-burnt hand on the purr's velvet that covered Stanley's and the struggle for life began.

It was short, the men were fairly matched, a brief struggle, a loud splash, one loud piercing shriek and all is still.

A few bubbles rise to the surface of the pool and that is all. Not a sound passes over the fatal spot where two souls have plunged into eternity.

CHAPTER XIV.

SIR ARTHUR STANLEY.

In a beautiful villon on the banks of lake Como a lady and gentleman sat at breakfast. It is a glorious morning, and the windows are opened from floor to ceiling, in the Italian fashion to admit the soft balmy air and delicious sun.

The view through these windows was one of the rarest loveliness. The villa was situated on a hill overlooking the lake, which lay like a shield of burnished gold. A cool breeze from the south, laden with perfume of shrubs and flowers, filled the mansion, and the soft ripple of the water on the beach broke the fragrant stillness of the mellow air.

The sound of oars and the singing of the boatmen came faintly on the wings of the wind, and the soft notes of a thrush, on the orange tree, mingled with them pleasantly.

Nothing could exceed in beauty the Italian blue of the sky, and the rich varied hues of the gardens on every side, with their terraces, grottoes and flowers of every clime.

The blue retiring hills melting into the deeper azure of the sky, and the white marble villas, statues and vases relieving the green velvet of the turf in the foreground made up a picture of voluptuous sweetness that could be seen no where, save in Italia the land of dreams!

"What a glorious morning, Allice!" said the gentleman after a long look at the beautiful scene.

"Yes, is it not? I do not think I will ever love England half so well again as I did before I saw Italy."

"Oh! I don't know. I did not care for England when I left it, but I almost think I would be glad to go back now. It is three years since we bid good-bye to the chalk cliffs of Dover. Sidney must write and tell us how the old place is looking when he goes home."

"I wish they would come, it is our last day together. I hope Viola will like Northcourt. Antonio seems reluctant to leave Italy and I do not wonder."

"Yes, but Lady Northcourt has made her uncle promise that he will accompany them home and remain in England for one year, and then they will revisit Italy together. Oh! here they come. I will go out and meet them." So saying he left the room, in a few minutes no re-entered accompanied by a lady and two gentlemen.

"Ah! ma chère amie, bon jour," said Allice warmly embracing the new comer, who was a small lady, whose pale complexion, black hair and large dark eyes bespoke her Italian blood.

The gentlemen may remember has seen before, Sidney Neville and Antonio Santini.

"Have you seen the latest English papers, Stanley?" inquired Northcourt.

"No."

"Then you know nothing of this?" said Sidney drawing a paper from his pocket and handing it to his friend.

"Why, Sidney, what does it mean?" he asked growing pale with astonishment. "Surely this is dreadful, what can have happened?"

"Calm yourself, my dear fellow, it is not at all dreadful I can assure you. Stanley Riverdale disappeared three years ago and no trace of him has ever been seen since. I believe they pretty well ascertained that he was murdered by those old friends of ours, the gipsies. At all events when the hue and cry was raised they went off in a panic and have not been seen since. They have tried by every means in their power to find the lost heir, and now they are advertising for Arthur Stanley, heir to Holsbourne."

The colour came back to Stanley's face, and he took the paper up again and read the advertisement with a different feeling. All this was unobserved by Antonio and the two ladies, they were chatting and laughing between themselves, leaving the Englishmen to their newspapers for they knew it was useless to expect rational conversation from them till the latest English news had been discussed and disposed of.

Viola, Sidney Neville's Italian wife was a sweet tempered and beautiful girl, and passionately attached to her handsome English husband, he was of good family, being the orphan daughter of Antonio's sister. They had met with Sir Arthur and Lady Stanley and formed a lasting friendship.

"Allice, come here a moment, if you please."

"Yes, Arthur, what is the matter? You look so wise, you quite alarm me."

She rose as she said this laughingly; and crossed the room to his side. She noticed that he looked pale and anxious, and with a true wife's loving wish to share in all his troubles, she took the paper from his hand.

"Why, Arthur, what do they mean?"

Her cheek was pale now, and she gazed in her husband's face with fond anxiety.

"Don't be frightened love, you will be mistress of Holsbourne after all. Stanley Riverdale is dead it seems; and so poor Arthur Stanley is wanted to heir the estate."

"Thank God," said the wife, fervently.

"Why, Allice, I did not think you were mercenary," said Sidney, surprised at the earnestness of her tone.

"Neither she is, the dear good girl, but she was afraid some of her husband's wicked deeds in his youth, were going to come against him now," said Stanley, drawing her fondly to his side.

"When Viola heard that her friend Allice was to go to England also, she was wild with delight."

"Oh! happy day, how glad I am," she cried, clapping her hands with glee. "But tell me if all, why have you had such solemn faces?"

"Listen," said Sidney, and taking up the paper which had caused so much excitement he read aloud for every body's benefit, the following notice:

"Holsbourne Hall, Surrey."

"Information wanted of Sir Arthur Stanley, only son of Sir Hubert Stanley, late of Worow, in the county of Herts. Sir Arthur Stanley, if living, is requested to communicate at once with Sir Claud Riverdale, Holsbourne Hall, Surrey, or Messrs. Larkin and Giles, Lincoln's Inn, London. Any information of Sir Arthur's whereabouts, if living, or authentic information of his death, received at either of the above addresses.

"London, August 9th 1788."

"Authentic information of his whereabouts will be best conveyed by himself," said Sidney, gayly. "So the sooner we all pack up, and be off, the better."

There was still a shade of anxiety on Lady Stanley's beautiful face, and her husband drew her to one side, and begged to know the reason of this.

"Arthur, are you certain that the old days will not come against you now?"

"Yes, darling; why do you ask?"

"Because I would rather lose the best estate in England than that you should run any risk."

"There is no danger, love. Stanley is dead, Sidney is my friend, and Truucheon and all his party have left England. Who will recognize Sir Arthur Stanley, Roving Roger the highwayman?"

CHAPTER XV.

HELSBOURNE HALL.

It has been our lot to see this grand old house in joy and in sorrow, let us visit it once more. It is the evening of a lovely summer day, and old Sir Claude sits at dinner in his lofty dining hall; he is surrounded by servants, and at his feet lies his old stag hound Hollo, the only thing left the lonely old man, to love, or care for.

It is sad to think of him, alone in the great house, and he must often feel dreary when night closes around. Surely, when he sits there, on the long winter evenings, he must see anon in fancy, his wife, and the friends of his youth; or his son and niece, about whose fate hang such dark clouds of mystery.

Allice, the fair young girl who vanished as if by enchantment on the eve of her bridal, and Stanley the young strong man, who went out in all his pride and beauty on that fine summer day, and never returned; never again was seen by mortal eye. Surely their faces must often come up before the lonely old man's vision.

He has waited long for Stanley to re-appear, and somehow lately he has lost heart.

"I will advertise for Arthur Stanley, and if my boy is alive that will bring him back, for he is very proud. He had all the Riverdale pride, my poor boy."

This was done; for six months the notice had appeared in the London Post, the great paper of its day, but that had not called Stanley Riverdale back, ah! how could it?

Sir Claude sits alone, the wax lights burn faintly above his noble old head, the last of the Riverdales! The proud race have passed away, not one is left to claim the title and estate.

"What sound is that, Turnbull?" asked Sir Claude, whose hearing is wonderfully keen, for a man of his years.

"A carriage, Sir Claude," the man replies.

"Who can it be?" the Baronet says, half to the footman, half to himself.

"Perhaps the lawyers have found Sir Arthur, sir," suggests Turnbull respectfully.

The door bell rang, a loud clear peal, and footsteps cross the corridor, the door is flung back, and the porter announces:

"Sir Arthur and Lady Stanley!"

The old man rose to his feet, as they enter the room, the gentleman stands back, but the lady rushes forward and throws her arms around Sir Claude's neck exclaiming:

"Ah! my uncle, do you know me?"

The old man put her away, and looked at her long, and earnestly; he passed his hand over her face, and lifting the slender white hands looked at them, all this without uttering one word.

"Dear uncle, do you not know me?"

"Yes, Allice, only I was wondering, and is this Arthur Stanley, Hubert's son?"

"Yes, you have not seen me for years, and I do not expect you to remember me, but I have been with your solicitors, to see my uncle, Father Francis, and have convinced them that I am no impostor."

"It is well; no, that is not the face of an impostor."

The old man regarded his now found heir with almost a father's pride, and his joy at Allice's return knew no bounds.

Holsbourne is no longer a sad or lonely house, merry children are playing on the lawn, and happy laughter rings once more through the lofty old rooms.

Sir Claude is walking on the terrace, hand and hand with Claude Riverdale Stanley, a noble boy of five years, who is telling him:

"I is got a pony now, you gave me my pony cause I is your boy, and you loves me."

"Yes, Claude, you are my boy, but you must take care that you don't fall off that pony, for what would mamma say then?"

"No fear, I won't fall off! I ain't frightened, uncle. I'm a Riverdale, and all the Riverdales are plucky!"

Sir Claude looks down proudly on his own boy, and the old man's heart swells with pride, as he murmurs to himself: "A real Riverdale!"

THE END.

True Love Running Roughly.

A "pity reporter of the St. Louis Republican thus tells not only how a young man got into trouble, but also how his innamorata was exposed:

That the course of true love does not always run smooth is sometimes verified even in this amicably disposed metropolis. For some reason (probably the action of atmospheric rigidity upon the cuticle) the winter season has been set apart as the favorite time of year for the happy consummation of "love's young dream," and the advent of Jack Frost usually inaugurates the forming of matrimonial alliances—both offensive and defensive—for the discomfiture of icy sheets and cold pedal extremities. Married men always appeared to the best advantage during cold weather—they look so warm and comfortable—and single ones probably "take note" and are anxious to profit by their example.

Some such thoughts must recently have entered the head of little Charley G., who valiantly wields a yard-stick in behalf of a prominent Fourth-street dry goods establishment, and whose seductive smile is supposed (by himself) to have quite a cannibal effect upon the hearts of his fair customers. Charley, who is a very Beau Brummol in dress, and thinks himself Don Juan No. 2, recently fell in love, over the counter, with a beautiful blonde, who, to add to her numerous other attractions, was an orphan, an heiress (to be) and single.

Not a thousand miles from Lucas Place resides a widow lady, unincumbered with children, and quite comfortably situated in regard to this world's goods. She moves in the very best of society in that wealthy and aristocratic neighborhood, and with her resides her niece, Clara—the beautiful blonde with whom our friend Charley became enamored.

But the old lady having higher aspirations than a "Clark's best spool thread—500 yards" artilleryman for her niece, pre-emptorily forbade that young lady's holding intercourse with Charley.

As Clara is dependent upon her aunt, she, of course, appeared to acquiesce in these ambitious designs, but at the same time registered a vow to her looking-glass that no one in the world should ever supplant the dapper yard-stick man in her maiden heart. As it would not answer to offend her wealthy relative, however, the young couple indulged in clandestine meetings; sometimes at the house of a mutual friend, on Pine street, and sometimes, when the old lady was attending prayer meeting at Clara's home. They swore eternal love on these occasions, vowed that persecutions should never separate them, and that should the worst come to the worst, a crust of bread, a brown-stone pitcher (with hands on both sides like they have at Beau DeBar's) filled with the crystal fluid from the bubbling spring, and a dry goods box on end somewhere in the vicinity of Kirkwood would be transmogrified into a palace of peace and plenty, sacred forever to their undying love.

One afternoon recently, Charley received a note from his Clara, stating that her relative would that evening attend prayer meeting.

The intimation was enough, and eight o'clock saw the young couple seated upon the sofa in her aunt's library, billing and cooing in the regular or-bodex turtle-dove style. Little Charley, lured on by the witcheries of love, became perfectly "immense." He wound an arm about her waist and vowed that her form was "sylvan-like." He toyed with her long golden ringlets, and likened them to "truant sunbeams," with a few other remarks to the effect that heaven's dearest gift to her sex was a "wealth of bright golden hair." Then when she blushed he swore the roses had been robbed, and when she smiled, that her lips were ruby portals to a casket of pearls. (By "casket" he probably referred to that orifice in the human countenance usually termed the mouth, and the "pearls" spoken of were undoubtedly the teeth.)

Indeed, he talked so nice, and she fed upon his glowing words with such a relish, that the old lady was rattling away at the door, as though the house next door was on fire, full five minutes before the absorbed lovers heard her.

"Great heavens! my aunt!" exclaimed Clara. Charley grew a trifle pale, and muttered an interjection or two pertaining to the front end of a mill pond.

It appears the old lady having reached the place of prayer, found the meeting epizootic'd, or postponed, and consequently after some little chat with a neighbor or two had returned home at this most inopportune moment.

What was to be done? Not a closet or nook invited retreat, and there Charley stood and wished that he was a mileage or stationery bill, so that he could pass the house, or a member of the Louisiana Legislature, or some other dreadful feature of modern civilization.

At last a brilliant idea occurred to this lady-love. In the corner of the library lay a bundle of carpet that had been brought to the house that day to refresh the sitting-room, and having been duly inspected by the ladies was temporarily left in a tumbled heap in the corner.

A hasty explanation took place, and then Charley entombed himself beneath the mass with a fervid vow that he would die for her sake were it necessary, and Clara then admitted her aunt.

That relative was not well pleased at being kept so long on the door-step, and sharply demanded what had become of the servants.

"I sent them to bed, dear aunt, so that I might have the pleasure of remaining up for your return—but I fell asleep," innocently remarked the ingenious girl.

This loving explanation somewhat appeased the old lady, who, after warming herself, walked over to the bundle of carpet, and picking up a corner, wondered how it would look by gas-light.

Clara hastened to assure her that it would not look nice at all, in fact she was so confident of it that her aunt need not go to the trouble of an investigation.

The old lady pondered over the stuff for a few moments, while her niece sat trembling upon the sofa, and little Charley felt that the world might come to an immediate end, and not annoy him a particle by the suddenness of the change.

At last, however, the crisis passed, for with some new idea entering her head, the old lady turned, and remarked that she was "tired to death," and plumped her two hundred and fifty pounds avoirdupois upon the heap, and little Charley assumed the shape of a human pancake. He would have groaned, but did not have wind enough left for the purpose.

A little shriek from Clara attracted the old lady's attention to her niece.

"Why, you are all dressed up to-night."

"Yes, aunt, dear," replied Clara, mentally conjecturing how Charley felt in his pressed out condition.

"Yes," returned the other, "you look very well, only rather pale. Are you sick?"

"I—I don't feel very well," answered her niece, silently consigning her relative to Chicago or some other wicked place.

"I'm sure you don't when you will lace up so tight, my dear," affectionately remarked the incorrigible old lady.

"I don't!" faintly repudiated Clara, while little Charley rasped the skin off one of his ears in trying to quietly twist his head in a position where he might distinctly hear anything of interest.

"You don't! you do; and at your time of life it is positively preposterous. If you were a young, giddy girl, it would be different; but for a person of your age—"

"O aunt!"

(Charley barked some more skin off and became decidedly interested.)

"No, there's no 'O aunt!' about it," continued the incorrigible, savagely oscillating her head. "You sometimes act more like a silly school-girl than a woman who had seen twenty-six years of life."

"I haven't!" exclaimed Clara, and Charley put his mouth in shape for a whistle, but was immediately flattened out by a restive bounce of the old lady's.

"You haven't! Why, yes you have—and nearly twenty-seven! Why, what is the world ails the girl! What are you whimpering about, Clara?"

"My—my head aches. Please don't talk," begged her niece, not quite positive as to the effect her decision might have on the young martyr under her aunt.

"Your head aches, does it? Well no wonder wearing all that mass of hair on your head is enough to make it ache. What nonsense it is when there is no one to see you; besides, it is positively making you bald-headed!"

"I'm not!" vigorously responded the young lady, burying her face in her hands as she thought of all the nice things she fellow under the carpet had been saying.

"You're not! Yes you are. There's a bad spot on the top of your head the size of my hand!" and the old lady extended a palm in illustration. "Now, what in the world are you crying about, Clara? Sakes alive niece, you'll cry yourself sick, and then you'll not be able to visit the dentist to-morrow."

"Both the dentist! Do keep still, aunt!" cried Clara, while Charley attempted to scratch his head, and hid his arm nearly disoriented by a few restless moves made by the old lady as she indignantly reprimanded her niece for her disrespectful petulance.

"It was your own wish to go to the dentist, Clara; you know it was. You said that set hurt your mouth, and you wanted—Goodness gracious! What under Heaven does all the girl?" for Clara had darted out of the room with a smothered cry of rage and anguish, leaving her relative to bounce up and down on the pile of carpet in sheer astonishment, until little Charley's respiratory organs were like a pair of collapsed bellows.

Then the old lady followed her niece up stairs, and when the house was all quiet, Charley unlocked the front door, and, stealing forth, walked down Lucas Place a sadder and a wiser man.

Clara left town on a visit, and the young ladies who patronize the Fourth street dry goods establishment think Charley must be suffering from a case of unrequited affection, he looks so flat, and talks so dismal.