

By-and-By.

What will it matter, by-and-by, Whether my path below was bright, Whether it wound through dark or light, Under a gray or golden sky, When I look back on it, by-and-by.

What will it matter, by-and-by, Whether unhelped I toiled alone, Dashing my foot against a stone, Missing the charge of the angel high, Bidding me think of the by-and-by?

What will it matter, by-and-by, Whether with laughing joy I went Down thro' the years with a glad content, Never believing, nay, not I, Tears would be sweeter by-and-by?

What will it matter, by-and-by, Whether with cheek to cheek I've lain Close by the pallid angel, Pain, Soo'ning myself through sob and sigh; 'All will be elsewise by-and-by'?

What will it matter? Naught if I Only am sure the way I've trod, Gloomy or gladdened, leads to God, Questioning not of the how, the why, If I but reach Him, by-and-by.

What will I care for the unshared sigh, If, in my fear of slip or fall, Closely I've clung to Christ through all, Mindless how rough the path might lie, Since he will soon smooth it by-and-by.

Ah! it will matter, by-and-by? Nothing but this: That Joy or Pain Lifted me skyward, helped to gain, Whether through rack or smile or sigh Heaven—home—all in all, by-and-by!

My Earthly Love.

No dim and dreamy ghost I sing, Nor phantom floating in the air; To one who treads the solid earth, I send alike my song and prayer, To perfect matter strong and sweet, The face and form of her I love; The matchless speech and subtle breath, An eyelid trembling like a dove,— A dove within an earthly nest, Who hears the coming or her mate, Or feels his kiss upon her breast, And chides him that he comes so late.

The matchless joy of sense I sing!— The earthly joy of here and now: Before no fading ghost I kneel— Before no distant future bow, Go, little song, and seek the lips Of her who waits you with a kiss; And tell her, only in her arms Thy poor master dreams of bliss, No angel seen by prophet eye, Nor shaped by art with peerless grace, With feet that tread the azure sky, And roam the boundless field of space, Is half so true or sweetly fair As one who walks with me apart: I lose me in her shining hair,— She is the goddess of my heart.

O Death so like a stormy cloud Within a gentle summer sky, Thou lonely phantom sad to see, I will not fear thee though I die! Go, little song, to her I love, And tell her Death is in the air; It is his shadow on the world That makes the present moment fair. We have one hour of life and love And ages filled with silent sleep— There is no time for faith to pray, Nor time for sullen grief to weep, Go, tell her if we love not now, The life we live is only death And dust that have no joy in time, And only feed on bitter breath.

SELECT STORY.

THIS AND THAT;

And the Woman who put them Together

HE always said she could do it! When I want to find out anything; John, I can always make a way to do it. I can put this and that together as well as the next one, she remarked at the breakfast table, with a nod at once emphatic and mysterious.

Mr. Humphreys put down his coffee cup uneasily. Yes, Tiddy; but they don't always fit when they are put together.

When I put them together, they do, John Humphreys, said the lady, with a still more decided bob of her head.

Mr. Humphreys sighed, but wisely kept his thoughts to himself. More than likely there's nothing to find out, Tiddy, its so easy for folks to imagine things, he ventured aloud.

If you mean me, don't say folks, Mr. Humphreys—I'm not an overwhelming multitude. In the first place, the bain was burned— you won't call that imaginary, I suppose, seeing the bells were rung, and you were in such a dreadful stew to get to the fire, that you rushed off with your coat wrong side out, and a boot on one foot, and slipper on the other. Well, the barn was set on fire, that's the next thing; for I heard Mr. Scoue talking about it, and he said 'incendiaries,' of course, if it was done, somebody must have done it; and I have my suspicions, that's all. There are some things that look a little queer and mysterious, lately, and a woman's eyes are sharp.

Mr. Humphreys picked up his hat, and put it slowly down on his head with his two hands, as if it were a ben-

ediction, and walked slowly away to the mills—his screw mills, 'around which the little village had grown up. He did not doubt Mrs. Humphrey's vaunted ability, he only dreaded her success, for she was a female Nimrod, and he, quiet man, had no sympathy with the chase.

What's the use of looking for things you don't want to find, and that don't concern you when they are found? he put the matter interrogatively to the trees as he went along. Suppose folks have done what they shouldn't, you can keep on liking them all the same if you don't know it; but if you go and find out, then everything's upset, and you don't know where you are—at least, where you ought to be.

The trees rustled and whispered as if they knew countless things they had no mind to tell, and Mr. Humphreys dropped his conversation with them, and murmured to himself, it's a dreadful investigating world, this is!

He fancied the old mill was full of the same spirit that day; the long iron arms seemed reaching out and grasping after hidden things, the countless wheels were grinding out secrets, and all the rattle and roar was a babble of condemning and grimy faces of the workers, half afraid the prying machinery might draw into sight the guilt of Mrs. Humphrey's suspected. He hoped none of them had done such evil, but if they had, he did not want to know it. The doing must have been dreadful enough without being found out, and if they could only escape, and have another chance—Mr. Humphrey's invariably took up that position, and his wife as invariably drove him from it with the reminder that such weakness would put an end to all law and justice.

He passed down the black, smooth steps—worn smooth by the tread of many weary feet—and crossing a platform that connected the main building with a smaller one, entered the office where Philip Mead was bending over the company's books. Nephew Philip was Mr. Humphrey's pride, and was indeed, one of the rare points upon which his wife and he were quite agreed in sentiment and action. He watched the swiftly-moving pen for a moment, then carefully slid the burden from his shoulders and proceeded to unfold it, after the manner of a peddler with his pack.

You know that barn of Scoue's, Phil? Folks say it was set on fire. Ah? said Phil, still writing rapidly. Yes; and your Aunt Tiddy, she—she suspects some one.

Whom does she suspect? I don't know, Phil, really havn't the least idea, and you see, that's what sort of troubles me.

Phil dropped his pen and laughed. Well, uncle, it's pretty certain that neither you nor I did it, so it can't be either of us.

That's a fact! that's a fact! The elder gentleman brightened as if this were a piece of unexpected intelligence that threw great light upon the subject. Then he ran his fingers through his short gray hair until it stood erect upon his head, glanced cautiously around the room, and suggested uneasily, you don't think any of the mill men would—could—eh?

The boys? It isn't likely. What on earth would any of them do such a thing as that for?

Philip's voice rang out cheerily, and Mr. Humphreys looked relieved; and after a moment remarked apologetically, you see, I'm kind of nervous, I suppose, Phil, and I don't like such things naturally. The buying of a pack of hounds always did make me uneasy about the poor creature they were hunting do you know? Philip concealed his smile at this unconscious tribute to his aunt by turning to his desk again, and his uncle, comforted, sought his own at the opposite side of the room.

At the house the subject was not put aside so quickly. Mrs. Humphreys washed up the silver as if she were making a chain, and every spoon was a link she glanced at Jeanie Cameron, when she came in from a walk to the post office, as if she also were a link; in fact, Mrs. Humphrey's was not sure that pretty Jeanie might not prove a very important link. Where could the girl have been that evening of the fire when, on going to call her, she had found her room empty? It was a beautiful moonlight night, but young ladies did not usually take moonlight walks alone, and who could have been with her—pretty, but poor little seamstress, Jeanie Cameron? The voice that first called fire, too, had sounded like a woman's; Mrs. Humphrey's had almost forgotten that. Jeanie!

The girl looked up with the startled blush that came so frequently of late. That night Scoue's barn was burned, the first cry I heard was in a woman's voice, I'm sure, and I was just thinking it sounded like yours.

Yes, I— I suppose it was mine, I hadn't heard any alarm, and the light was so bright when I first saw it.

Where were you? The question came rather sharply, and Jeanie absorbed in a search through her work-basket answered briefly:

Only down at the garden-gate—then. The last word was added slowly and with a little effort, as if only for truth's sake.

Mrs. Humphrey's noted it, and placed a large table spoon in her collection on the table; she had got an idea. Her next discovery was communicated to Philip Mead a week subsequently, when he came up from the office to a late breakfast one morning—late, and therefore a solo.

I've had my suspicions all along about that barn burning, Philip, and lately I've noticed something queer about Jeanie—

You don't suspect her of been an incendiary? interposed Philip in astonishment.

No; I'm not an idiot. I should think not, responded Philip so emphatically that Mrs. Humphrey's look of complacency returned.

But a girl may have a lover, you know.

Philip was occupied in pouring cream into his coffee. He must have liked a great deal, for he suddenly emptied half the contents of the pitcher into his cup.

And he may not be a suitable one at all; in fact, it's more than likely that he wouldn't be, pursued Mrs. Humphreys.

Her nephew twisted his brown mustache rather nervously. He did not reply; but he was so flatteringly attentive that she grew more definite.

The short of it is, that I know whom I'm talking about. Only two nights ago she stood at the gate for a good half hour, talking with some man. I saw them from my window—couldn't see his face, but he was a tall, well-built fellow, and wore a light hat. What do you think of that?

The young gentleman appeared unable to arrange his thoughts for utterance, but the lady repeated her question suppose you had been at the window, and had seen her talking to a man in that way, what would you have thought?

I think I should have disapproved of it; indeed, I am very sure that I should have disliked it exceedingly, Philip answered decidedly.

Exactly; and you'd have had no doubt that he was her lover?

But then, she has a perfect right to love and be loved, aunt Tiddy, and I don't see what connection it can have with the fire at Scoue's, suggested Philip.

Right enough if it were some one suitable, as I said before. But who would be around here? Most of the mill men—

Humph! ejaculated the listener.

Yes, I know; they're foreigners, nearly all of them, or too rough, not at all the sort Jeanie would think of. But some good looking fellow with a show of fine manners and gentlemanliness, might persuade her that she was in love with him, even if he were a dissipated good-for-nothing, equal to burning barns or any other mischief. Girls are so foolish I wouldn't wonder if Jeanie knew, or guessed, who had a hand in that fire; she looks so confused and startled when anything is said about her being out that night.

Philip laughed, then explained apologetically. I am thinking, you know how much meaning may be attached to a very little thing.

Mrs. Humphreys smiled blandly. Yes, if any one has eyes sharp enough to see into things. I shall keep mine open, and the girl won't throw herself away if I can stop it.

The conversation was abruptly terminated by the entrance of its subject. Mrs. Humphreys vanished in pursuit of silk and cording required for the days dress-making, and Philip lost his interest in breakfast, and became quite absorbed in studying the small seamstress. Perhaps she felt that the brown eyes were watching her, for she bent low over her work—so low that one bright curl was presently caught in her thread. "Ah! you tangled my life in your hair, Jeanette. In the gold of your beautiful curls my pet."

quoted Philip softly.

The blue eyes flashed a sidelong glance at him, half shy, half laughing, and it drew him to her side at once. He lifted the shining hair with reverent caressing touch, and stood looking down upon her.

Jeanie my aunt means to keep you from throwing yourself away.

Means to keep you from doing it, more probably. There was a quiver of pride running through the sweet voice. No; she said you. I have concluded to help her.

Deeply grateful, I'm sure.

By trying to make the fellow more worthy of you.

I would, answered the mischievous lips. A work of supererogation entirely said the tender eyes.

There was delicious snatch of earnest talk and then—well, then Jeanie was marvelously industrious, while Philip, at the most distant window of the room studied the morning sky, and when the door opened, this and that were so far apart that even Mrs. Humphreys did not dream of putting them together.

Mrs. Humphreys had not exhibited the full length of her chain of facts and deductions to Philip. In that wonderful memory of hers, where everything she saw or heard labeled and stowed away for future possible use, as model housekeepers arrange the contents of their attics, an old remark had been drawn from its dark corner into the light. I wouldn't be chief mourner if such a miserly old fellow as Scoue should lose some of his property; he deserves to.

Rolf Towe had spoken the words in her hearing more than a year before; but he had not thought much about them at the time, but they might mean a great deal, after all. A handsome, genial fellow was Rolf, whom most people liked despite their judgement, since he was also wild, dissipated and reckless. He worked in a fitful, uncertain way at the mill. Natural ability would have secured him a higher place, but his miserable excesses rendered him often scarcely fit for the one he held. Who could tell what he could do? What motives might have prompted him? And he was tall and wore a light hat! Certainly there seemed some fitting together about these things. Mrs. Humphrey wanted to study it up, and was not sorry when Mr. Humphreys said—a little hesitatingly, as knowing her usual opinion in such cases—Rolf is the mill once more. I thought, last week, I never would try him again, but I don't know what he'll do if we send him off—I don't really do if I could help giving him another chance.

And when he's good for anything he's the best man about the establishment, added Philip.

Jeanie's look of pleasure was unmistakable. It was very kind. If he had been sent away it might—at least, many people only grow bitter and desperate when they are hopeless, she murmured. And Mrs. Humphreys nodded assent—either to the remark, or to her own thought.

She kept her watch; the blue eyes seemed to grow more dreamful day by day, and the gray eyes grew sharper; the golden head bent low in reverie over the sewing, and the head of pepper and salt grew more emphatic in its nodding. The days slipped into weeks; the late autumn flowers bloomed and faded, following the fallen leaves; the fruits were gathered in, and then came long heavy rains, beating the last shreds of clothing from the shivering trees, unloosing the mountain streams, and raising the river to a wild swollen flood. Rheumatism stalking about after victims during this congenial season, had captured poor Mr. Humphrey's and he was a prisoner. Mrs. Humphrey's could attend to two things at once, and while she concocted liniments, and bound in hot flannels, she did not relax her vigilance as a sentinelle.

Since that first time, she had caught more than one glimpse of the light hat and Jeanie's girlish figure together, and now she learned that Rolf was going away—possibly because he knew that he could hold his place at the mills but little longer, possibly because of some more urgent reason, Mrs. Humphrey's thought, and she determined to be more certain before he departed. Jeanie might elope with him. No, she did not believe that, but he would surely try to see her the night before he went away, and there would be promises exchanged arrangements for correspondence, and all that sort of a thing. If she could but keep Jeanie out of the way, and meet him herself!

It was a weird night, the moon now shone out brightly, now was hidden behind masses of wild, hurrying clouds, and the wind blew fitfully. A bright fire burned in the open grate, but Jeanie paeing thoughtful to and fro, turned often from its cheerful light to gaze into the gloom without. Mrs. Humphreys vibrating between the pleasant parlor and the invalid's room above, finally paused, hot salt and vinegar in hand.

You keep looking from that window, Jeanie, as if you had just as lief be outside as in.

I wouldn't mind, answered Jeanie, smiling faintly. The wind always had a charm for me.

Then, if you really wouldn't mind, I wish you would go, exclaimed Mrs. Humphreys, quickly improving her opportunity. Philip is at the office, and will stay there all night, for the watchman is away. The man lives down near the flats, you know, and the river has raised so that his yard is flooded and he feared there might be danger and has gone to move his family. Philip was too busy to come up to supper, and I cannot bear to have him there all night without anything to eat. I would like to send him something, but Mr. Humphreys is sick, and I cannot leave him, so there is no one to go unless you will do it.

It is too bad that he should stay without it, said Jeanie hesitatingly, and I do not see that any one else can go. It really seems as though I ought to do it?

If you care anything about his comfort, responded Mrs. Humphreys briefly. And so the basket was speedily packed, and Jeanie cloaked and hooded for her walk.

If she knew how much I care, would she have sent me, I wonder? questioned Jeanie making her way down the garden path. She has such high plans for Philip, and I feel almost like a traitor every day I live here, knowing how I thwarted her hopes, though so innocently. She will know it soon, and then I so dread her disappointment and anger. My cowardice keeps Philip from explaining all I know; put how can I bear to have her so deeply offended with him because of me? And yet—Oh! I cannot wish he had not loved me—my poor life's one treasure!

Watching the clouded sky and dreary garden seemed to possess quite as strong a fascination for Mrs. Humphreys as it had done for Jeanie. She settled her patient, comfortably brightened the fires, and dooped the curtains over the windows; but these last were pushed aside at intervals, that she might peep out into the night. Once she threw a shawl over her head and walked down to the gate: but there was no one in sight.

If he comes, I will meet him and tell him what I know, and what I suspect, and see if I cannot learn the truth, she said. Again and again she looked toward the road, now seeing it clearly in the moonlight, now straining her eyes through the gloom, but no one appeared. At the faintest sound of footsteps she bent her head to listen, but in vain; Rolf did not come. Suddenly upon the stillness broke the sound of the factory bell, ringing in quick, sharp strokes.

What's that? questioned Mr. Humphreys, starting up from his first nap.

Mrs. Humphrey opened the window hurriedly, and leaned out to listen. In a moment other windows up and down the street were raised. Who's ringing that bell? What's the matter? What is that at the mill? called one voice after another. Only questions at first no answer. Then a boy, running up the road, paused under Mrs. Humphreys window.

Its the river! the river—broken through the dike—all around the mill—carried away Mr. Humphreys's office—floating down, he uttered breathlessly. But the disconnected sentences were intelligible enough. Mrs. Humphreys turned, with a white face, to explain to the invalid, who had only partly heard or comprehended.

The street, so quite a moment before, was speedily alive with people, hurrying hither and thither, and talking eagerly. Mr. Humphreys, attracted by the sounds without, insisted upon sitting up but it proved a poor relief for his intense excitement.

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