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### THE LADY AND THE PAGE.

A STORY OF MOORISH SPAIN.

BY MARY'S PEN.

[CONTINUED.]

'Ysabel,' said Leonardo, sadly, after a pause, 'thou forgettest I am thy father.'

'My father! dearest papa!—my own father, forgive me. Thou art my father! but do not, her tones were low and earnest, 'oh! do not force this hated match on thy child. She will do anything—all thou wishest—but oh! do not seal her misery forever.'

The Count permitted the ardent caresses of the maiden, then putting her gently from him, he told her to remain in her turret. He had much to say to her. He would seek her when he was ready to tell her what he had to say. Then turning to Jose, he added, 'Follow me, sir page, I have somewhat to say to thee also.'

The maiden watched the receding forms of the two until they had disappeared, and then she murmured, 'He spoke kindly to me, and Hope warned her heart. A bright Hope! Hope the deceiver! What would the world be without thee, fairy Hope? Thou comest like a dream, whispering in our souls' ear, thy witching fancies, until they seem realities—and the is to be, stands before us a living now! Great is thy power, fair Hope—and thou knowest it—and so thou goest on deluding mortals—making the dim shadowy perspective a glorious foreground. So, when our hearts feel sad and weary, and long to burst the chain that binds them to this dark earth, thou comest with the dews of heaven fresh glistening on thy lips—and tellest us fairy tales, and singest us fairy songs—and kissest our hearts with thy cool, dewy lips. And we believe thee, ay, and let thee deceive us again and again.'

The Lady Ysabel rested her wild, black eyes—beaming with a thousand thoughts—upon her mother's picture, and kneeling before it, she clasped her little hands and implored her gentle mother to look down kindly on her daughter. 'And, mother,' continued she—her low, sweet voice scarce audible—'ask Him, the mighty one—whose throne is in high heaven—to forgive thy erring child, if she forgets, in her love for the creature, the Creator. God forgive me if I love him more than I ought, for I cannot love him less.'

The Lady Ysabel watched all that evening for her father, and the next day—and the next—and then her cheek began to pale, and her eye grew dim with weeping. For Hope had grown weary and fled. She could not dream either why the page came not—a little indignation mingled with her sorrow.

The duenna did all she could to restore her young lady to her right mind, as she said. At length she brought her a letter—saying—'Take it, my senorita, a holy friar gave it me for thee. Learn from it, Senorita Ysabel, to control thy too great grief. It is sinful and wrong to indulge in sorrow as thou dost.'

The Lady Ysabel knew the writing—tremblingly she broke the seal, and read—'My gentle Ysabel—Thy father hath forbidden me the castle, or ever to see thee again—but fear not, dearest, thy father cannot withstand thy gentleness—thy goodness—Thou wert not made to be unhappy—thou art too good—too kind—too true. God will not see thee made wretched. He watches over thee. He will not desert thee, and dearest, remember there is one heart that beats for thee—and that alone—whose every pulse is thine. Sunshine is midday without the light of thine eyes to tell where shineth the sun, and when, gentlest, I would see thee, I would press thy hands upon my heart—thine wild throbbings might be stilled. I would look into the clear depths of thy truthful eyes, and learn there a lesson of calmness—of faith to bear, and hope to look beyond. Thy duenna, sweetest more than mistrusts my disguise—but a golden bait has lured stronger mincs than hers from the clear waters of truth. I cannot quit the castle grounds, for in it is all that is dear to me on earth. Write dearest, if thou canst, to thine own'

The lady sat before her scribble to write to him she loved, when she heard her father's step. She had only time to crumple his letter in her bosom as the father entered. Ever obedient to her heart's impulse, she sprang towards him, and throwing her white arms around his neck, she called him her dear, dear papa, and burst into tears.

'Calm thyself, my Ysabel. I would tell thee frankly why I ask thee to sacrifice thyself—to seal thy misery, as thou sayest. He led her gently to an ottoman, and seated himself beside her.

'Ysabel, wouldst thou see thy father penniless, homeless, a beggar?'

'Papa!' looked the wandering eyes of Ysabel.

'I repeat it, Ysabel, wouldst thou see thy father reign all these fair acres, and starve a homeless beggar? Wouldst thou, Ysabel?'

'What meanest thou, papa? in mercy tell me.'

'If by one act of thine, it were in thy power to make thy father's happiness, wouldst thou not do that act?'

'Dear papa, thou knowest I would—but oh! tell me all. What am I to do? And yet I know—but why? tell me why?'

'Ysabel, by becoming his bride, thou canst save thy father from becoming a beggar.'

The girl shuddered, but said in a low, calm voice—'Father, tell me why—tell me all. Make a confidant of thy child. I can bear anything. See I am calm.'

'Ysabel, I will in as few words as possible. A year ago, you may remember, Talavera was here. He has not been here since. A short time after that, his last visit, the page came—though it is not of him I would speak. We played—Talavera and I. At first I won—in the success of the moment I staked high—and lost. I still played on—every throw swept off acre after acre of the lands my father owned. Midnight saw me without a farthing—and without a foot of earth to call my own. Then came a bond. I signed it. It gave me back my broad lands—my wealth—but it deprived me of the only thing I had on earth to love—of you, my Ysabel! See! here is the bond.'

The lady's heart was still—very still—so still it almost frightened her. Her cheeks, lips, hands, were cold and bloodless. It seemed as though her blood had all gone to her heart—and frozen there! Her eye was passionless, it was so calm. She held the open paper before her, and without reading or seeing, she read and saw enough to know that the fair grounds and castle of Ysola-Rosse—where she had lived from her infancy—where her father had loved her mother—were to go into the hands of the Talavera, unless she became his bride.

'Ysabel, I have sworn thou shalt be his bride, but I will recall my oath if thou sayest so. What is thy decision?'

'I will wed him,' replied the girl. Leonardo clasped her to his heart, and kissing her cold brow, he added,

'The day thou art seventeen was the day decided upon—it will be here in a week. But if thou wilt be too soon, no doubt the Marquis will—'

'I will not be too soon.'

'Ysabel, thou frightenest me, thou art so pale—I will not force thee into what would be thy unhappiness.'

'Nay, papa, I had much rather be unhappy myself than to see thee so. But I will not be. To-morrow thou shalt see me more cheerful.'

The wily lord had learned the way to make his daughter's will his own. He loved that daughter, and felt a father's pity for her. But he thought although she suffered then—and it pained him to the soul to see it—she would soon forget her youthful passion, and as the wife of Talavera, she would gradually learn to be happy. Her future husband was all that was noble and good—all this thought the father—and then he thought 'The Castle of Ysola-Rosse will still be mine.' The father's conscience was almost quieted.

'I have forewarned playing, Belle,' said he, 'never, should I live forever, will another card pass through my hands. Ysabel, my darling child! do not look so sad—seek the cool air, it will revive thee. Go and gather thy favorite wild flowers: they will divert thy mind from thy sorrow. My noble, generous girl! He fondly kissed his child, and then withdrew.

Ysabel left to herself mechanically sought the garden. She wandered over her favorite haunts, scarce knowing what she did. Her heart, her thoughts were still as the grave. She reached her bower—the little vine-clad bower, where the page and she had so often sat listening to the music of each other's voices. And there, on the very seat where they were wont to sit—was Jose! the page!

'Ysabel! beloved!' exclaimed he in unfeigned delight—and the girl was in his arms. 'Dearest, best, my gentle Ysabel! I am once more permitted to see thee!—to clasp thee to my heart? But, sweetest, how thou hast changed. How pale thou art. Go with me dearest, I will be thy father, brother, husband, friend. Leave this hated castle—now—speak, dear one, wilt thou go with me? Dear, dear Ysabel, tell me.'

'Jose, I cannot—I have promised to become his bride!'

'But, dearest, they shall not force thee to do what thou dost not wish.'

'Jose, I had my own free choice.'

'And thou didst choose—'

'To become his bride.'

'Will nothing induce thee to alter thy determination?'

'Nothing.'

'Good bye, Ysabel.'

'Jose! Dear Jose—but the page was gone.'

The next morning found the lady Ysabel in the spot where the page had left her. Then followed many days of sickness. Her life was despaired of. Day after day she lay, pale, cold, insensible. Reason had forsaken her throne. Her sweet smiles were gone, and the speaking glances of her dewy eyes had fled. Her voice too—she had not spoken since that night. Even the pulsation of her heart were silent. Life alone remained—life without its light. And how her father watched over her—and how bitterly he

lamented, and cursed himself for having brought her thus. At length light shone in her eyes—the light of life. Morning dawned in upon the darkness of her soul.

'Good bye, Ysabel!' said she.

'My own child, what dost thou say?' asked the father, bending anxiously over her.

'Good bye, Ysabel!' and she looked up in her father's face and smiled—'That smile! it haunted him to his grave!'

'Are you better, my own Ysabel? my dearest child?'

'Yes papa—I am well. What a strange dream I have had. Ah! now I recollect—and she sunk into a gentle sleep.'

Day by day she gained health and strength. The father never left her side.

'Papa,' said she one day, 'will you let me see that paper again? you know the one I mean.'

'No, my child, you never need see or think of it.'

'Do let me take it, papa—you don't know how well and strong I am—do, dearest papa!'

And the father was prevailed upon. She saw she could save her father from ruin, and her mind was made.

'How old am I, papa?'

'Three weeks ago saw you seventeen.'

'Does that—does my future husband know of my illness?'

'He has sent repeatedly to inquire after your health. His courier was here this morning.'

'Will you send him word I am well—and am ready in two weeks from now to become his wife?'

'Are you in earnest, Ysabel?'

'Perfectly so!'

'Is it of your own free will you speak?'

'It is, papa! And the father was deceived—perhaps too willingly so.'

The Lady Ysabel was able now to revisit her favorite haunts. Every thing she saw brought the page vividly before her eyes. Sometimes an inscription on a tree—the walks the flowers, the bower where last they met—all brought with them the memory of him. She strove to banish, as high treason to her happiness, all thoughts of him—and the firmness of her nature conquered. She familiarized herself to all the old spots where she had loved to be with him—and she thought she was happy—almost—happy.

The day at length came—clear—cloudless—sunlight. And then the lady's heart misgave her—she said not a word, however, but let them deck her in her bridal gear, scarce knowing or caring what they did.

Evening came. The chapel was brilliantly lighted. The bright red wine flowed freely—and joy danced in every heart, save one.

Ysabel was pale, very, very pale, when she entered the chapel. The orange buds that wreathed her hair were not more pale.

The Talavera had not yet come. All was ready. The priest in his long flowing robes—the father—the bridesmaids—the guests; for the father had invited many a noble house to witness his daughter's nuptials. All were ready, and still the bridegroom came not. At length was heard a confused movement, and, in the midst of that joyous, mass of life, the Marquis of Talavera was thrown from his carriage, and the servants, in their fright and dismay, scarce knowing what they did, had born him in a litter to the chapel.

The Lady Ysabel grew even more pale, as she looked upon the bier. There lay the lord who was to have been her husband! She gazed on him in a sort of nightmare fascination—a weight seemed taken from her heart—a feeling of relief mingled with the horror of the hour.

The Dona Ysabel enjoyed one short month of tranquility—and then came news from the castle of Talavera. The will of the marquis had been read. He had bequeathed to his son and heir all his vast estates, together with the Lady Ysabel, should he himself die before the marriage took place. The bond still held good!

A letter came from the young marquis to the count, demanding his daughter's hand in marriage. The letter was gracefully written, and told how he had long heaved of the wondrous beauty of the Dona Ysabel, and how ardently he desired to become the possessor of it.

Again the lady yielded to her father's persuasion. The present marquis was young and handsome—so the objection of age was removed. All Spain knew he was noble, and brave—and all the bright-eyed daughters of Spain might well look enviously on the favored Ysabel, that the young Talavera had chosen her.

He was then travelling in the interior of Europe. His letter was dated, Vienna. One year from the day of date, Talavera's death was the day fixed upon to celebrate the bridal of the bravest cavalier and loveliest flower in all Spain.

Ysabel yielded, and tried to seem cheerful, but her step grew slower and slower, and her fair face grew more and more pale. As her days went on she each day lost some part of this earth, earth. So very gradual was the change that neither her father nor those around her seemed to observe it. So, passed seven months. Four months more were to find her a new home in the heart of the Talavera.

She daily visited the spot where she had last seen him, in the hope of—she knew not what.

The Dona Ysabel was in her bower—neither reading, nor sewing, nor watching her flowers—but in a state of listlessness, half reclining on the cushioned seat, when suddenly her name was spoken! It was not her father's voice. The next instant saw the Dona close to the heart of the page, Jose! Neither spoke—the heart of each was too full for words—dull words cannot express our strongest emotions: when the heart is too big for utterance, speech is but a mockery. Words came at length, and the page told her how much anguish he had suffered, and how he could no longer stay away from her he loved. That he came, hardly expecting to see her, and if he did see her, he feared he should find her changed.

'And, dearest Ysabel, thou art changed—not in thy love—but thou art but the shadow of the Ysabel that in days gone, bounded so joyfully over these hills.' He held up her hand—

'It was so thin and transparent of hue, You might have seen the moon shine through!'

The Lady Ysabel told the page all. How that she had consented to become the bride of the young Talavera. The page leaped the reason from her too, why she had consented to become the bride of one she could not love. He smiled when he heard the Talavera must become master, either of the castle and property of Ysola-Rosse, or of the lovely Lady Ysabel.

When Ysabel retired to rest that night, it was with a light heart. Day after day witnessed the meetings of the lady and the page—and day after day witnessed her returning bloom of face and buoyancy of heart. She was once more that glad, bright Ysabel as when the page first came to her father's castle.

The father, without inquiring the cause, saw his child happy and smiling, and he was satisfied. And she was happy and smiling—the smiles never left her little dimple mouth—soon as one went another came. Even in her sleep, her joyous heart beamed from her face.

The morning came bright and sunshiny as it had done just one year before. The chapel was again illuminated—again were the guests assembled—and again, surrounded by her bridesmaids, came the Lady Ysabel into the chapel. But oh! what a different Lady Ysabel from the one of the year ago. The bridal wreath encircled her brow—and below that fair brow beamed out the happy pair of eyes imaginable! What could it mean!

There was heaved among the guests a universal murmur of admiration as she made her appearance. So beautiful, so bright, so radiant a being they had never seen. Her face appeared actually to emit light—so truly did the bright sunshine of her glad young heart shine through.

A slight movement at the great double door of the chapel—and the bridegroom, the Marquis of Talavera was announced!

Quite as great a sensation did the noble, manly figure of the young marquis create, as had the softer and more gentle one of the Lady Ysabel.

The father seemed struck dumb in sudden surprise—at length, burst from his lips—'The page!'

Any of the old gossips of Spain will tell you the rest of the story—and what a joyous wedding there was—and how every one said there never was so well matched—so noble a pair, as Don Jose, Marquis of Talavera, and his gentle bride, Ysabel! They will tell you, too, that the honey-moon, instead of lasting but thirty-one days, did outlast thirty-two years—and the love that was true to the sire could not but bless the son.

So endeth the story of 'THE LADY AND THE PAGE.'

'Horrible!—A Father Murdered by his Son!—The Batavia Spirit of the Times, gives the following account of a murder at Byron, in the State of New York on the 16th ult.

A young man by the name of Benjamin T. White having, for several years past, had a grudge against his father, on account of not being put in possession of a portion of property, determined to satiate his revengeful feelings by murdering both his father and step-mother. White came up to the house as his parent was entering the door: he took hold of his coat collar, pulled him about so as to face him, took out a pistol from his pocket, and shot him through, just under the shoulder. He then threw him down, and commenced beating him with the butt of his pistol. The step-mother immediately ran to the assistance of her husband, and had the presence of mind to reach down and pick up the pistol (which had fallen in the affray,) and was raising up, when she perceived the murderer drawing another from his pocket, which he aimed at her; and she boldly escaped him and dived into the side of the road, when she fired, but without effect. The young man then made for the woods, but was pursued by a number of citizens, and arrested in three or four hours. In speaking of the murder to one of his captors, he said—'I don't know whether I killed the old man or not, but I meant to—I took good aim.'

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNALS.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

March 22.

Mr. L. A. Wilmet, from the Committee appointed on the 19th day of January last, to take under consideration the subject of Agriculture, submitted the Report, and he having read the same, handed it in at the Clerk's Table, where it was again read. The following are extracts from the Report—

'The Select Committee on Agriculture, beg leave to submit the following Report—'In view of the general Commercial embarrassment at present prevailing throughout the Province, and in prospect of its continuance for some time to come, we conceive that every reasonable encouragement should be extended by the Legislature for the advancement of our Agricultural interests.'

'The conditional grants of the Legislature have been drawn during the past year by several Societies to the amount of about £700, and from Reports of the proceedings of some of those Societies, now before us, we are happy to say that the small Legislative allowance has been productive of a vast amount of good.'

'The Reports before us are from Societies in the following Counties:—Charlotte, York, Carleton, Sanbury, Kent, Gloucester, Northumberland and Westgouche, and the information therein contained is of the most encouraging character.'

'The Charlotte County Society should deservedly rank the foremost as it has been in successful operation for more than 22 years past. This well conducted and spirited Society has been productive of much good. The importation of Seeds and Implements, since its formation, amount to upwards of £1400, and the Premiums awarded for Stock and Produce, and donations to poor Settlers during the same time exceed £400; and when it is borne in mind that these laudable efforts have been principally aided by Legislative grants, we have much pleasure in commending the perseverance and successful exertions of this Society as a worthy example to others throughout the Province.'

'The Secretary of this Society in his last Report observes, that although the severe and continued drought during the latter part of Summer and the first part of Autumn, more or less affected all the Crops, with the exception of Hay, the general yield may be estimated at nearly a fair average, and the Board had much pleasure in stating that, in some instances the Wheat Crops were good, and therefore augur favorably for its future cultivation under skillful management with the aid of experience, especially in regard to the selection of Seed.' In other parts of this valuable Report it is said, 'the liberal grants of the Legislature have enabled the Society to extend its operations without exhausting its funds and may probably authorize it to embrace further measures for the improvement of Stock, especially Sheep and Swine; and should the same fostering care be continued, importations of live Stock to forward that important object may be anticipated. The Board are the more encouraged in entertaining this project from the increasing disposition among Agricultural followers to co-operate with the Society.'

'We are highly gratified with the satisfactory evidence contained in the several Reports before us of the practicability of growing good Wheat crops in all parts of the Province. Good Seed, properly prepared and sown early in well tilled soil, has in almost every instance produced good crops.'

'Cheered by these encouraging Reports we unanimously recommend the continuation of the conditional grant as heretofore made, and we hope that the several Societies will endeavor during the present year to set a part as large a portion of their funds as they possibly can, for the importation of improved Breeds of Stock from Great Britain. We would suggest that arrangements be immediately made by the several Societies to procure statistical returns from their respective Counties or Districts of the quantities of Grain, Pasture, Turnips and Hay, grown in each year.'

'The Reports of the Societies should in future be accompanied by accounts current of income and expenditure.'

A Tell Preacher.—Stephen, the traveller, mentions in his work on Central America, a planter who owns two hundred thousand acres of land—ten thousand head of cattle—some thousand mares and mules—seven hundred horses—four yoke oxen—seven large rivers, and three hundred sailing ships. From the top of one of the volcanoes, the observer is high his pile, and see the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans at one view!