

Suddenly he changed color, his eye glazed and he fell to the ground, dead of heart-disease, before a hand could be stretched out to save him. No one pitied him; no one was surprised; for his intemperate habits were well known and his temper hated by all. The confusion attending his death and the consequent changes in the command distracted the attention of all too effectually for Frank to be very hotly pursued by men and officers who all rejoiced in his escape.

Very soon, his very name was forgotten, as our "friends" all forget us in time.

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Some years had elapsed since the foregoing incident, but the old manor-house—or farmhouse, if you will—still retained its antique beauty, little marred by the quiet routine of country life. Time seemed only to tinge with a somewhat soberer gray its fine, old mullioned windows, carved gables and the picturesque ruins of its little chapel.

New tenants, from a distant shire, had now taken possession of it. They brought with them, as servant and dairy-maid, a tall, gaunt, muscular woman, apparently about thirty; such a brawny specimen of the "soft sex" as may often be met with in northern England. Her name happened to be Mary (not an uncommon one) and, by a strange coincidence, they gave her the very same bedroom formerly occupied by her beautiful namesake, poor Mary Gardner, between whose delicate, rich loveliness and the grim appearance of the new Mary there was a contrast that did not fail to elicit many a joke from the thick heads and ale-washed wits of the neighbors who remembered "old times."

This Mary—honest, diligent, implicitly trusted by her employers—was the terror of the male servants, none of whom ever entered on any familiarity with "Gruff Mary," with the exception of one big bumpkin, employed in the field, who, perhaps under the influence of a "wee drappie," once tried to snatch a kiss and brought down such a practical application of the frying-pan on his thick skull that he fled in terror,

She did not greatly relish any kind of frolic within the range of her authority. Gravely, silently, completely, she performed her tasks and made others fulfil theirs.

From the hour when she took possession of her room, no other foot was permitted to cross its threshold.

Those who contrived to peep in at the half-opened door espied an interior the very ideal of neatness and order, and saw, hanging over the bed, a portrait of the late Mary Gardner, that must have been left behind by the former occupants of the house, when her parents died.

One fine, summer evening, "Gruff Mary" was seated on her little couch, long after the rest of the household had retired to rest. She was looking sadly out on the fading sunset, and would now and then turn to gaze on the portrait over the bed, with a curious expression on her grim visage that would have astonished those who only saw her during working-hours. Like some other stern natures, male or female, it was evident there must be some soft bit of sentiment left in her heart.

June nights are so very short in England that, though it was now nearly eleven, a faint rosy light in the west—as it were a last ray forgotten by Phœbus as he sank to rest—remained as a souvenir of the mild and exquisite English twilight. It shed, a very faint glow even on the little miniature, and something in the appearance of it seemed to rivet the lonely woman's gaze, as if she remembered a time when she, too, had been fair and beloved, so that she sat dreaming there, seemingly unconscious that the darkness had long become complete. All was perfectly silent within and without the walls of the old mansion, and nothing was audible save that soft, solemn hum which seems to rise from the hills, woods and streams on such a night.

And oh, if it be true, as wise men tell us it is, that all the millions of throbbing hearts, lovely or heroic forms, aspiring and tender souls that have trodden this fleeting stage before us, have passed into the atmosphere so truly, that we cannot tread one rood of earth that is not the tomb of valor and beauty, nor