

# Story of the Week: "A Night of Terror."

By Mrs. Alexander.

THE HON. MRS. ST. GEORGE was busy entering items in her weekly account book, and generally examining the bills of the month one morning a good many years ago. She was a tall, thin, gray-haired woman, with an aquiline nose and distinguished air, which cast a reflection of grandeur on the diminutive study of her tiny house in C. Place, S. W.

She was still frowning over the butcher's book when the door was hastily opened by a bright-looking girl of 18 or 19, with shining nut-brown hair, and laughing eyes of no particular color, a slightly "up-turned" nose, and lips parting to speak over a set of pearly teeth. She held a note open in her hand, and came almost at a run toward the severe-looking lady who was studying her books, and who looked at her sternly.

"Is the house on fire, Clara? Pray shut the door!"

"Do read this note from Alina Carson, auntie. I suppose I may go."

Mrs. St. George took the note and read it slowly. "Manwell," she said, turning the note to look again at the address, "does that mean the lunatic asylum?"

"Yes."

"Alina Carson," repeated Mrs. St. George, "is that rather elegant girl who called on you last week the daughter of—"

"Yes, auntie," interrupted Clara, eagerly, "she is the only daughter of the celebrated Dr. Carson, who does such wonderful kindness with the insane. You know rather a lot about her."

"An excellent person, no doubt," interrupted Mrs. St. George in her turn. "But not exactly the sort of host for you."

"Why?" cried Clara, opening her eyes in genuine astonishment.

"These experimental doctors can scarcely be considered gentlemen."

"Aunt Horatia," said Clara, "Dr. Carson is a perfect gentleman! I have always been proud of knowing him. He is so good and clever, quite wonderful. I have set my heart on this visit to Manwell, and I shall be leaving town soon."

"If your father does not object, Clara, it is no affair of mine," returned her aunt, coldly. "How did you come to know these people?"

"Alina and I were at school together for nearly three years at Versailles. During the short holidays Dr. and Mrs. Carson always came over and spent their time at Versailles—not to take Alina across the channel—she was rather delicate, and they were, oh! so kind to me. Alina was staying with us in York-shire last autumn, and it is so unlike that she and her mother were away all the first part of my stay with you. Well, then, auntie, shall I write to say that I can go on Thursday?"

"Thursday?" taking a list of engagements for a letter rack. "Why, that is the 25th, the day of Mrs. de Tracey's dance, the last of the season."

"I don't care the least about it. I would much rather go to the Carsons' unless," checking herself, "you want me to go with you?"

"No!" abruptly. "There is no use in taking you to dance."

"Very well, auntie. I shall write to accept. There is just time to post before 11 o'clock."

The day which intervened before the appointed Thursday was not exactly pleasant for Clara. She was not in the good graces of her stately relative, who, nevertheless, tried to drive her to Paddington station in her neat brougham, and send her almost clerical looking man servant to take her niece's ticket and see her safely into the train. A short run of but an hour brought Clara Rivers to her destination, where her friend awaited her, and after a delighted greeting drove her in a pretty coupe of gray-green lines to the large establishment and extensive grounds over which Dr. Carson ruled.

The merry chatter of the two girls—recalling of former treasures of clothes and books, photographs and sketches, not to mention tea with Mrs. Carson, a pleasant, easy-tempered woman, made them forget that it was soon time to dress for dinner.

"What charming grounds," said Clara, looking out of the window of her bedroom, while her friend glanced round to see that nothing was wanting for the guests' comfort.

"Yes; my father is very particular about them. At the other side there is a wood and a large lawn, but this wing is quite the best. The patients' quarters are to the right from this room."

"Are you ever nervous about them, Alina?"

"Oh! no. The poor things that are really bad are far away in the left wing. The quiet, reasonable ones are in the center."

"Do you ever see them?"

"Oh, yes—when it is safe. When my father thinks we do them good they come to dinner with us, or Harry and I go to play tennis with them."

"Your brother Harry?"

"My half-brother. You remember he came to see me the last winter before last? You know he is mother's son. Mother was Mrs. Vigors before she married father. He has often asked about you. I hoped he would be here today. He has been away on a walking tour in the Pyrenees, but I am afraid he may not come till Monday. He is not due at West-lich till Tuesday or Wednesday. You know he is a gunner. Now I will leave you to dress."

This accomplished, not without pleasant backward glances at the brief visit paid by her friend's brother to their Versailles school, Clara descended to the drawing room, meeting her friend at the door. Alina Carson was a tall, slim, stately-looking demure, with fair hair and blue eyes; she was about a year older than Clara, and much more decided in character and manner. The girls made a pretty contrasted pair as they entered together. Mrs. Carson was seated in her favorite chair, stroking a beautiful Persian cat which sat on her lap, and the doctor was conversing with a well-set-up, well-dressed, solid-looking man, not tall but broad-shouldered, and strongly built. His face was rugged and stern, and a scar of a saber cut seemed his brow, narrowly escaping his left eye. Clara thought she had never seen such piercing, glowing dark eyes before.

Dr. Carson welcomed his young guest with kindly warmth, and presented the gentleman with whom he was speaking as Major Delmege.

"I presume we need not wait for Harry," said the doctor to his wife.

"No," she returned; "he would be here by this if he were coming. We shall not see him now till tomorrow," and she rang for dinner, which was immediately announced.

Clara found herself vis-a-vis with the her who from time to time looked at her with almost alarming fixity, only at intervals, however, for he gave all his serious attention to his dinner. Judging from his performance she imagined it must have been a considerable

time since he had dined previously. At length his appetite was appeased, and he began to talk with his host and hostess, by degrees absorbing most of the conversation, and very interesting his talk was. He had been a great traveler—had traversed Asia from the north, entering India from Mongolia, and finally sojourning in the East. He was a Buddhist priest, whose disciple he became, and who initiated him into the wonders of occultism—some of the strange doctrines of which he was a devotee. His eyes had been closed, and he was listening open-mouthed to the major's description of the first men, according to the theosophic ideas.

"Poor Major Delmege!" said Mrs. Carson, as she drew her chair to the open window and sat down to inhale the delightful odors of the garden. "He was growing quite excited when your father looked at me. We must make him sing when they come in."

"Still, my father has great hopes of him," said Alina.

"Why! can it be possible," began Clara.

"Yes, indeed," interrupted Mr. Carson. "He is a patient of my husband's, and a very interesting one. He was badly wounded in the head, as you see, at Inkerman, and has been subject to curious illusions ever since, though in some respects quite reasonable."

"Is he very dangerous?" asked Clara, a little anxiously.

"No! When he first came he was inclined to quarrel with the men, but he was always nice to Alina and myself. He is a fine voice, and we get him to sing; it always calms him."

A short silence ensued.

Clara did not at all like the idea of passing the evening in the laboratory of a madman. His eyes had frightened her. It was all very well—these benevolent experiments of Dr. Carson's—but he ought not to prosecute them when he had guests.

While she thought, the major, followed by his host, came into the drawing-room. His eyes immediately sought Clara's with a somewhat full expression, but he sat down beside Mrs. Carson and talked to her in a low voice for a few minutes, while the doctor began to question Clara about her experiences of a London season, and a dress for the evening.

The gentleman rose and walked over to Clara.

"Excuse me," he said with a wonderfully pleasant smile. "I did not catch your name when you were presented to me. You remind me of—of an old friend."

"Oh, my name is Rivers," said Clara, nervously.

"No," shaking his head, "that tells me nothing. Still, even the semblance of a familiar face is welcome. Tomorrow, if you will allow me, I will bring the picture of a lady whom I fancy you resemble."

"Now, Major Delmege," interrupted Mrs. Carson. He immediately obeyed, and seating himself at the piano struck some chords with a fine, strong, clear voice, and sang a song in a low, sweet, and pleasant tone.

He went on to play some curious, wild, sad airs, unlike any Clara had ever before heard in the keys. The gentleman sang in the keys.

"But you will sing, will you not, my dear major?" asked Alina, with whom he seemed very friendly.

One set down Clara, and he sang a camp song that our fellows were fond of when we were before Sebastopol. It is rough, you know, addressing himself to Clara, "but you cannot expect much from an uncultivated soldier. The words and music are both mine."

He dashed into a martial prelude, like a march, and in a rich, powerful, but untutored voice, trilled forth some verses with a refrain ending in "Comrades mine." The air was spirited and catching, and charmed Clara, who was exceedingly fond of music.

One set down the piano, the major seemed disposed to remain there till the following morning. He sang song after song in a variety of languages, played airs and dances that were new to Clara, and danced the waltz with her. He made up for the time, my dear major. We ought to be going to bed, but I must stay a moment longer to see that nothing is wanting for the guests' comfort."

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dream uneasily of her host's patient, who seemed to be playing backgammon with her Aunt Honoria, and finally threw his dicebox at that stately person's feet.

She woke at this sudden conviction that there was a noise in the next room or passage, and a rushing sound, and she listened intently; no, the sounds must have been part of her dream. Now she only heard the distant baying of a dog. How long had she slept? She opened her eyes, and she felt strangely reluctant to get out of bed and fetch them.

What was that? A quick, soft footfall passing her door. The door opening on the passage which led to the staircase. Her heart beat. She could almost hear it. If, oh, if she could escape to Alina! But she dare not attempt it. She formed a desperate plan, and then she heard footstep, a soft creak, rather firm, and inconsiderate of possible neighbors, going to and fro in the room next hers. About the middle of things thrown about and the jangle of metal. While she listened appalled, her restless neighbor began to whistle loud and clear; she had no difficulty in recognizing the melodies of the "Comrades Mine."

Her dreadful foreboding was right, then; this lunatic was close to her! Perhaps he held the key of the door on his side! Might come in and strangle her at any moment! What should she do? She dared not open the other door. She might meet him in the passage. She turned the door slowly, and stepped into a further stage of fear she slipped out of bed and groped her way to where she had thrown her dressing gown over a chair, and put it on, felt for the matches of the table, and feel as she would on the carpet, she could not lift her foot. She was a creature of the other side of that frail door, might be irritated into pouncing upon her, and silencing her for ever. There was a pause in the whistling, and a voice. "Can't you sleep, Clara? The unhappy madman is going to sleep? Poor Clara indulged in a gleam of hope. She stole near the door. The moment Alina's room would make a dash for Alina's room."

The next moment the sound of a heavy weight, driven with immense force, it seemed to her, against the door, and she was conscious of a sharp cry of self-control. She crept close to the entrance, and a cry for help, a despairing cry, escaped her.

There was a sudden cessation of the whistling, and a voice. "Can't you sleep, Clara? The unhappy madman is going to sleep? Poor Clara indulged in a gleam of hope. She stole near the door. The moment Alina's room would make a dash for Alina's room."

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## Lonely Labrador

In the Land of the White Bear—Unique Sport and Toothsome Food—Monster Trout the Reward of the Angler—Intrepid Sportsmen Have Their Reward.

"There goes a first-class funeral!"

A bystander remarked, as we cast off our wharf lines on the 30th day of June and started upon our summer cruise.

The Swallow's register was 22 tons, and more than half of her available space was occupied by her boiler and machinery. She was capable of steaming six knots an hour under favorable circumstances, and could sometimes cover nine to ten with a good fair breeze, as she was schooner-rigged and carried a small mainsail, large foresail and jib. Her length was 48 feet; beam, 12 feet; draught, 6 feet; and her cabin accommodated six persons. There were two extra berths in the engine room, and for the fireman and engineer. A small boat, surely, to charter for the journey from St. Johns, Newfoundland, to Northern Labrador, and return, a salt water voyage of over 2,000 miles.

The majority of the uninformed would undoubtedly have agreed with the merchant's chance remark, but the result proved him mistaken. There were two extra berths in the engine room, and for the fireman and engineer. A small boat, surely, to charter for the journey from St. Johns, Newfoundland, to Northern Labrador, and return, a salt water voyage of over 2,000 miles.

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not until we turned south from Seig-Bick Head that we obtained our first shot at any of these polar monsters.

Quite a gale was blowing, and we were bowling along homeward, under reefed sails, at a good ten-knots speed. A family of three of them was sighted half a mile off our weather bow. Although our vessel was a most excellent sea-boat, it required some time to wear ship and overhaul them in the heavy sea, and this gave us an opportunity to quiet our nerves, so that by the time we came within range there was no danger of our over-shooting.

The bears were in the water, making toward the land, a mile or more