

THE STAR.

The Drowned Man.

AN INCIDENT AT SEA.

The night was dark and gloomy,
As we at anchor rode,
And the sombre sky was burdened
In dark and dismal mode.

No sound, but the sound of the water,
Disturbed the stillness of night,
And the lamp that burnt in the cabin
Shone with a glimmering light.

The pilot was tired and sleepy,
His eyes were dark and dim;
And many a manly wrinkle
Hard work had left on him.

But while the deck he slowly paced,
He was passed by one of the crew;
'Tis true he saw the man was drunk,
But his form he hardly knew.

But before another minute
He passed again with a dash,
And then from o'er the bulwarks
Was heard a dreadful splash.

Then a cry for help was heard,
A shriek from his very heart,
Which told in terms of anguish
He was loath from life to part.

Another cry—and yet two more,
As if he combated with fate,
And 'fore the boat could be got off
Alas! it was too late.

The tide was running swiftly,
And death seemed staring grim,
And mocking at his efforts
As still he tried to swim.

A cold sweat came upon his brow,
And he uttered his last heart cry;
But still no helping hand appeared,
And he was doomed to die.

And now, when he was sober,
And his drunken fit was o'er,
He sank again another time,
But he sank to rise no more.

SEARCHING FOR A WIFE.

[CONCLUDED.]

Wait? Yes; I could do anything now. I felt new life within me, new thoughts new purposes crowded my mind, and I determined to win a name that Leonora should be proud of. That night, my dreams were of heaven; and the bright genius that shone in them all was the lovely face of my promised bride.

The following day, I was sitting in one of the private parlors with Leonora, when the door opened, and my father entered.

For a moment I was nonplussed, and must have changed color like a chameleon. After greeting him, I led Leonora forward, and said—

My father, please to welcome this lady as your future daughter.

The corners of his mouth twitched nervously; for a moment he regarded me with a quizzical expression upon his genial features, then he pressed his hands to his sides, and burst into a spasm of uproarious laughter.

Indignation took possession of me, and I demanded an explanation.

My father endeavored to speak, but failed, while I stood confronting him, with my hands thrust deep into my pockets, and my teeth firm set. At last it became intolerable, and I excitedly shouted for him to speak.

He gave two or three gasps, and while the tears rolled down his cheeks, and his mouth was wide open—ejaculated in broken accents—

You young rascal!—ha! ha! ha! You've done it—ha, he, oh!—I knew you would—ha! ha! oh!

Done what? What do you mean?
Why, fell in—ha! ha!—love with—ha! ha!—just the one I wanted you to!

I turned toward Leonora; she was standing with hands clasped and downcast eye. My father's words brought back to my mind the fact that Hastings was the name of the golden-haired beauty. Turning, I exclaimed—

And is this a daughter of your friend?
Of—ha, ha!—course it—ha, ha!—is—oh, dear!

And was it not you I saw at Wallack's?
Certainly—ha, ha!—you blockhead—ha, ha!—And the tears of laughter rolled down my father's cheeks in streams.

At last he became quiet, and offered the following explanation:—

A few days before you left home for Chicago, Mr. Hastings wrote me that Leonora was in New York. I then matured my plan. The morning after you left, I also started

for New York, and was with Leonora, at the house of a mutual friend. I saw you in the St. Nicholas, and saw what a fool you made of yourself in the street. I did not tell Leonora who you were; but joked her severely in regard to Wallack's, and ascertained that her mind dwelt considerably upon the stranger. During that time I wrote letters to you, and sent them to Boston to be mailed. As it is, circumstances have carried out my ideas equally as well as the plan which I had in mind.

Once again I turned toward my betrothed; the warm blood had reached her temples, and she appeared somewhat embarrassed. Advancing, I took her hand, and gazed into the clear depths of those fathomless orbs.

She raised her face to mine, and murmured—
Are you about to discard me because of my name?

No, he is going to put 'personals' in the 'Herald' and let his father answer them, interrupted my father, with a merry twinkle in his eye.

In answer to Leonora's question, I opened my arms. She hesitated a moment, and then flew into them, and since that day they have been her resting-place, and may God spare her to me many years more, is my constant prayer.

Up in a Balloon.

Ah! she was a stunner! continued Jenkyns. You should have heard that girl whistle and sing!—you should hear her laugh! She was a delightful companion. We rode together, and danced together, sang together. I called her Fanny, and she called me Tom. All this could have but one termination, you know. I fell in love with her, and determined to take the first opportunity to propose to her. So, one day, when we went out together fishing on the lake, I flapped down upon my knees among the gudgeons, seized her hand, pressed it to my waistcoat, and in burning accents entreated her to become my wife.

Don't be a fool! she said. Now drop it, do, and put me a fresh worm on.

Oh! Fanny! I exclaimed, don't talk about worms when marriage is in question. Only say—

I tell you what it is, now, she replied angrily, if you don't stop it I'll pitch you out of the boat!

Gentlemen, said Jenkyns, with strong emotion, I did drop it, and I give you my word and honour, with a sudden shove she sent me flying into the water; then, seizing the sculls, with a stroke or two she put several yards between us and burst into a fit of laughter, which fortunately prevented her from going any further. I swam up and climbed into the boat. Jenkyns, said I to myself, revenge! revenge! I disguised my feelings: I laughed—hideous mockery of mirth—I laughed. We pulled to the bank. I went to the house and changed my garments. When I appeared at the dinner table I perceived that everyone had been informed of my ducking. Universal laughter greeted me. During dinner Fanny repeatedly whispered to her neighbour and glanced at me. Smothered laughter invariably followed. Jenkyns, said I, revenge! The opportunity soon offered, There was to be a balloon ascent from the lawn, and Fanny had tormented her father to let her ascend with the aeronaut. I instantly took my plans. I bribed the aeronaut to plead illness at the moment when the balloon should have risen. I learned from him the management of the balloon though I knew that pretty well before, and calmly awaited the result. The day came and the weather was fine. The balloon was inflated. Fanny was in the car. Everything was ready, when the aeronaut fainted. He was carried into the house, and Sir George accompanied him to see that he was properly attended to. Fanny was in despair.

Am I to lose my air expedition? she exclaimed, looking over the side of the car. Someone understands the management of this thing, surely! Nobody? Tom! she called out to me, you understand it, don't you?

Perfectly, I answered.

Come along, then, she cried. Be quick! before papa comes back.

The company in general tried to dissuade her from the project, but of course in vain. After a decent show of hesitation I climbed into the car. The balloon was cast off and rapidly sailed heavenward. There was scarcely a breath of wind, and we rose almost straight up. We rose above the houses, and she laughed and said:

How jolly! We are higher than the highest trees! and she smiled, and said it was very kind of me to come with her.

We were so high that people below looked like mere specks. She hoped that I thoroughly understood the management of the balloon. Now was my time.

I understand the going up part, I answered. To come down is not so easy—and I whistled.

What do you mean? she cried.
Why, when you want to go up faster you throw some sand overboard, I replied, suiting the action to the word.

Don't be foolish, Tom, she said, trying to appear quite calm and indifferent, but trembling unconsciously.

Foolish! I said. Oh! dear, no. But, whether I go along the ground or up in the air, I like to force the pace—and so do you, Fanny, I know. Go it cripples! and over went another sand-bag.

Why, you are mad, surely! shrieked she in terror, and she tried to reach the bags, but I kept her back.

Only with love! my dear, answered I smiling pleasantly—only with love for you. Oh! Fanny, I adore you! Say you will be my wife.

I gave you an answer the other day, she replied—one which I should have thought you would have remembered, she added, laughing a little, notwithstanding her terror.

I remember it perfectly I answered; but I intend to have a different reply from that. You see those five sand-bags? I shall ask you five times to become my wife. Every time you refuse I shall throw over a sand-bag. So, lady fair, as the cabman would say, reconsider your decision and consent to become Mrs. Jenkyns.

I won't! she said, I never will! And let me tell you, you are acting in a very ungentlemanly way to press me thus.

You acted in a very ladylike way the other day, did you not, when you knocked me out of the boat? I rejoined.

She laughed again—for she was a plucky girl.

However, I went on, it's no use arguing about it; will you promise to give me your hand?

Never! she answered. I'll go to Ursa Major first—though I've got a big enough bear here, in all conscience. Stay! you'd prefer Aquarius, wouldn't you?

She looked so pretty I was almost inclined to let her off. I was only trying to frighten her, of course. I knew how high we could safely go well enough, and how valuable the life of Jenkyns was to his country. But resolution was one of the strong points of my character, and when I've begun a thing I like to carry it through; so I threw over another sand-bag and whistled the Dead March in Saul.

Come! Mr. Jenkyns, she said suddenly—come Tom—let us descend now and I'll promise to say nothing whatever about this.

I continued the execution of the Dead March.

But if you do not begin the descent at once I'll tell papa the moment I set foot on the ground.

I laughed, seized another bag, and looking steadily at her, said:

Will you promise now to give me your hand?

I have answered you already, was the reply.

Over went the sand and the solemn notes of the Dead March resounded through the car.

I thought you were a gentleman! said Fanny, rising up in a terrible rage from the bottom of the car, where she had been sitting and looking perfectly beautiful in her wrath. I thought you were a gentleman, but I find I was mistaken. Why, a chimney sweeper would not treat a lady in such a way! Do you know you are risking your own life as well as mine by your madness?

I explained that I adored her so much that to die in her company would be perfect bliss, and begged she would not consider my feelings at all. She dashed her beautiful hair from her face, and, standing perfectly erect, looking like the Goddess of Anger—or Boadicea, if you can fancy that personage in a balloon—she said:

I command you to commence the descent!

The Dead March, whistled in a manner essentially gay and lively, was the only response. After a few moments silence, I took up another sand-bag, and said:

We are getting rather high. If you do not decide soon we shall have Mercury coming to tell us we are trespassing. Will you promise me your hand?

She sat in sulky silence on the bottom of

the car. I threw over the sand. Then she tried another plan. Throwing herself upon her knees and bursting into tears she said:

Oh! forgive me what I did the other day! It was very wrong, and I am very sorry. Take me home, and I will be a sister to you.

Not a wife? said I, firm in my resolve to have the desired answer.

I can't! I can't! she moaned.

Over went the fourth bag. I began to think she had beaten me, after all, for I did not like to go much higher. I would not give in just yet, however. I whistled for a few moments to give her time for reflection, and then said:

Fanny, they say that marriages are made in heaven; if you don't take care ours will be solemnized there. I took up the fifth bag. Come, I said, my wife in life or my companion in death—which is it to be? and I patted the sand-bag in a cheerful manner. She hid her face in her hands, but did not answer. I nursed the bag in my arms as if it had been a baby. Come Fanny, give me your promise. I could hear her sobs. I'm the most soft-hearted creature breathing, and would not pain any living thing; and I confess she had beaten me. I forgave her the ducking; I forgave her for rejecting me. I was on the point of flinging the bag back into the car and saying: Dearest Fanny, forgive me for frightening you. Marry whomsoever you will. Give your lovely hand to your lowest groom in the stables—endow with your priceless beauty the chief of the Pankinwanki Indians. Whatever happens, Jenkyns is your slave—your dog—your footstool. His duty, henceforth, is to go whithersoever you shall command. I was just on the point of saying this, I repeat, when Fanny suddenly looked up and said, with a queerish expression on her face:

You need not throw that last bag over. I promise to give you my hand.

With all your heart? I asked quickly. With all my heart, she answered, with the same strange smile.

I tossed the bag into the bottom of the car and opened the valve. The balloon descended.

Gentlemen, said Jenkyns, after a moment's hesitation, rising from his seat in the most solemn manner, and stretching out his hands as if he was going to take an oath, gentlemen, will you believe it? When we had reached the ground, and the balloon had been given over to its recovered master, when I had helped Fanny to the earth, and turned towards her to receive anew the promise of her affection and her hand—will you believe it?—she gave me a box on the ear that upset me against the car, and running to her father, who at that moment came up, she related to the assembled company what she called my disgraceful conduct in the balloon, and ended by informing me that all her hand that I was likely to get had been already bestowed upon my ear, which, she assured me, had been given with all her heart.

You villain! said Sir George, advancing towards me with a horse-whip in his hand—you villain! I've a good mind to break this over your back!

Sir George, said I, villain and Jenkyns must never be coupled in the same sentence; and, as for the breaking of this whip, I'll relieve you of the trouble. And, snatching it from his hand, I broke it in two and threw the pieces on the ground. And now I shall have the honour of wishing you good morning. Miss, I forgive you. And I retired.

Now, I ask you whether any specimen of female treachery equal to that has ever come within your experience, and whether any excuse can be made for such conduct!

THE STAR

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Volum

S.	M.
..	1
7	8
14	15
21	22
28	29
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