

Next morning the Captain was out of bed and dressed fully an hour before his usual time. This circumstance did not escape "James," his man. That worthy shook his head and smiled knowingly. He knew something was in the wind to get the Captain out of bed before eight o'clock, early rising not being one of his master's failings. Nor was morning meditation another;—yet here, for half an hour, he had been sitting looking into the fire, doing nothing. But there James was mistaken. In those thirty minutes the Captain had, to his own entire satisfaction, proposed and been accepted; had married, and was now on his honeymoon, when—"Suppose she will not have you" was the thought that suddenly shoved its ugly head into his rose-hued dream. It roused the Captain from his musings very thoroughly—that thought—and roused, too, a hundred resolutions that he would do his utmost to change the lovely dreams to still more lovely realities, and that, moreover, he would be about it with no loss of time. He got some paper and a pen, and this is what he wrote:

"Will you join me in the library this morning, as soon after eleven o'clock as you can? We will have the room to ourselves then, I think, and I can speak to you without interruption. You know what I would say—if you do not come, I shall understand that you do not wish to listen to me, and I shall not trouble you again.

FRITZ HILL.

"There, I think I have made my meaning clear." He folded it up and addressed it.

"Here, James," he said to the man, "take this note and deliver it at once. It is for Miss Lupton—Miss Kaburn Lupton."

Whether James did not hear all that the Captain said, or whether his mind was too full of his own speculations to pay proper attention to his instructions is unknown, but this is what he did. He took the note, said "Yes, sir, I will attend to it at once," and left the room. Then he went in search of Nora, who would be probably able to tell him how to find Miss Lupton, and, while wondering where he should look for Nora, he came face to face with Katherine. This was good luck indeed—here was Miss Lupton. He never remembered the Captain's instructions—if he had ever heard them—that the note was for Miss Kaburn Lupton. Perhaps he thought it highly probable his master should wish to send notes to the handsome lady before him. At all events the note was addressed to "Miss Lupton"—oh careless Captain—and here she was, so without more ado he handed it to her.

"From Captain Hill, Miss Lupton," and, after a pause, "is there any answer, Miss?"

"No, James," and the man saw the blood rush up to her brow, though she spoke quietly enough, "no answer just now."

The library clock struck eleven, and the hands moved on to five minutes after—ten minutes after—the Captain was growing very restless. Suppose after all she should not come?—last night she had been cold, indifferent even. What right had he to hope that she would come? Now that he was prepared to give to the girl he loved, himself and all he possessed, it seemed, in love's self-deprecating eyes, little enough. He had money, but many other men had more. He was called handsome—she might not think so. He had ever been upright and honourable, but every gentleman was that. Then, he loved her—yes, there he could bear no comparison with all the world. No man rich or poor—good or bad—could love her more truly than he. But perhaps his love would count as nothing to her—and so, knowing that this was what he meant to offer, she would not come to the library at all, leaving him thus to divine that his life could have no part in hers. The clock struck the half hour. The Captain had grown white with suspense—there is no agony like it—and already he was wondering how soon he could get away from the Luptons, when he heard a step outside the door. She was coming—she was coming—after all she did care,—she would listen. He heard the frou frou of a woman's dress—ah! she had come. The door opened, and Katherine entered! For a moment intense disappointment choked his utterance; he could only look at her.

"I have come," she began, "to—to—" then she stopped and waited.

"Oh—ah—yes—to look for—a book, I suppose? Can I help you?" and he made a ghastly effort to speak as usual. He did not look at her—he could not. Even if he had, his own emotion would have made him blind to any tell-tale feeling depicted in her face.

"Do you know where—which shelf it is on? a novel, of course? the favourite literature of your sex,—don't deny it, so name the name."

He spoke at random—anything to keep her attention from himself. Oh if she would but go. Katherine Lupton did not lack of pride, and just now it was rampant. How dare the man speak in this light way? Had he not asked her to meet him there?—given her to understand he meant to ask her to marry him?—and now that she was here at his request he wants to know if she had come for a novel? Could he have forgotten his note?—could he—oh humiliating thought—have regretted his words, and now tried, by ignoring, to undo them? How dared he treat her like this—her, Katherine Lupton, his hostess? It was a bitter moment, but her pride was equal to it. She faced the Captain bravely. In a tone more nonchalant than his own, she named a book—waited until he found and gave it to her; made some remark about the weather; laughed at a little joke she made, and left the room with a song upon her lips, which did not die away till she was out of hearing. She did not come among her guests until late in the afternoon, and not one of them ever knew of the bitter, passionate tears she shed that day. Long years after, when she was happily married—a titled lady—the memory of those few minutes in the library could still wound her pride, if not her heart.

Meanwhile the Captain hoped and waited—waited and hoped, thinking of a thousand reasons that might have kept Kaburn from him—never dreaming of the real one. Waited while the hands crept over the minutes, and the clock had long ago struck twelve, and he knew, like many other men, that he had waited in vain. He put on his hat and rushed from the house.

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It was a cold, damp, mouldy, gloomy summer-house in which Kaburn sat down, after an aimless walk about the park; but she did not care. Possibly she persuaded herself that she liked it—it was a fitting frame for her thoughts, she told herself, half angrily, wholly sorrowfully. What a sadly disappointing thing her visit had been. Perhaps it was as well. She would go back again more readily to a life spent in correcting exercises and teaching fractions. At least she always got an answer to them—and that was some thing, and the life this side the schoolroom never answered expectations. Still it was hard, and only last night—oh what was the use of thinking of last night, and what Captain Hill had promised then. He had been beside her several times that morning and had said nothing—(poor man, he had wondered why she had said nothing)—had made no attempt to see her alone. Clearly, what he had promised last night and did to-day had nothing to do with each other. She had seen him go into the library, and shortly afterwards Katherine had followed him there. Probably they were engaged—perhaps laughing now over his flirtation with "poor Kaburn"! Hatful thought. They would see that she could laugh, too, just as gaily as they. She would be happy—or they should think she was. She would stay out here no longer—there were others who sought her—there was someone coming now. She jumped up, humming a little tune to show how happy she was, and went out to meet whoever was coming—it was the Captain. The song faltered, then stopped—so did the Captain.

"I did not follow you—" he began abruptly.

"Do not be alarmed, I never thought you did," and the song began again.

The Captain was brave as any, but this exhibition of indifference was hard to bear.

"I—I waited for you in the library for two hours, and I understand why you kept away. Please do not think that I came here to annoy you—I did not know that you were here."

Kaburn looked at him disdainfully—

"It's a pity," she said loftily, "that if you waited so long, you did not let me know you were expecting me."

Not let her know—this was too much!

"You read my note I suppose, Miss Lupton," and the Captain spake stiffly.

"Your note, Captain Hill? I never got any note from you."

"But I sent you one this morning by James, my man; you must have got it, Miss Lupton."

"And I repeat, Captain Hill, that I did not."

"Then—then you did not know what was in it?"—the foolishness of the remark was apparent, but that was no matter.

"How could I?" she said. "How could I?"

"And you did not come to the library because you did not want to,—knowing what I wanted—but because you did not know that I wanted you?" This was incoherent, but love translates regardless of grammar.

"How could I know?—you said—I thought last night—I knew—"

The Captain came close to her.

"Did you know last night that I loved you?"

No answer.

"Do you know *now* that I love you?" still no answer, unless in her face, and that was hidden—no matter where.

"Because, dear heart, I do—then, now and forever."

And then—but what have we to do with "then"; that was Kaburn's—the earnest of the sweet, and the joy to follow.

"When did you first love me?" she whispered presently; shyly putting the question all women ask—and some men—the answer to which is the first page in the delightful chapter they often turn back to read.

"When did I first love you," the Captain laughed, "the day I found your little boot in company with mine."

"My boot? When—where—you don't mean that you were at that hotel that night, too?"

"Indeed I was, and I can tell you—"

And then with peace in her soul and gladness in her heart—and the Captain's arm around her waist—Kaburn heard the "story of her lost boot."

ALSTONE COURT.

Military and Naval.

Vice-Admiral Charles Trelawny Jago, R.N., who commanded the Enterprise in the Franklin Search Expedition, died recently.

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One of the last of the heroes of the Peninsula, Lieutenant Bayly, died at Bath, England, a few days ago, in his 101st year. He belonged to the Royal Artillery, but had been on the retired list for 70 years.

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We are pleased to note that a valuable addition is to be made to the American squadron. H.M.S. Hercules had been designated as the new flagship; this is now changed, and one of the best of the cruisers, M.M.S. Blake, is under orders for Halifax and Bermuda. She is the largest and most heavily armed of the cruiser class; her length over all is 375 feet; breadth, 65 feet; draught of water, 25 feet, 9 inches, and her displacement is 9000 tons. She is of steel, and was built at Chatham in 1889; her indicated horsepower is 20,000, with capacity for 1500 tons of coal. The armament of the vessel is a very effective one, consisting of two 22-ton breach-loader guns, ten 6-inch 5-ton breach-loader guns, sixteen 3-pounder quick-firing guns, eight machine guns, and four torpedo-launching tubes. As an instance of the offensive capacity of these "infants," we may remark that the 22-ton guns exhaust 170 lbs. of powder at each discharge, sending a projectile of 380 lbs., which will perforate a mass of iron 19 inches thick; the 5-ton guns send a ball weighing 100 lbs., which will let daylight through an iron plate of 12 inch thickness. She was intended for special fast steaming of 22 knots, and for continuous work at 20 knots; but at her trial trip held recently her speed performance was not up to these figures, 21¼ knots being the utmost she could attain on a spurt, which indicates that in steady work the rate per hour would also fall below the 20-knot limit to a proportionate degree. In all other respects the vessel is a remarkably efficient one. Her comparatively light draught will enable her to come up to Montreal if the powers that be so order it. This city has never yet had the honour of a visit from a flagship, at any rate not for very many years. Her crew, officers and men, will number 580, including the Admiral and his staff.

The Thirteen Club Dinner.

In London—as in New York, Glasgow and several other towns—there is a club whose *raison d'être* is to protest against such time-honoured superstitions as the ill-luck of thirteen persons sitting down to table together. On Friday the London Thirteen Club gave its second annual dinner. Five groups of thirteen were bold enough to tempt fate, and as a reward had a very pleasant evening, under the presidency of Mr. Sheriff Foster. All sorts of trying ordeals had been devised and were heroically undergone by the guests. They sat down to dinner after passing under a ladder, with knives crossed, with peacock feathers in their buttonholes, with salt spilt all around them, to a *menu* calculated to exasperate, by its illustrations and wording, all the known dispensers of misfortune. The dinner and speeches were, of course, entirely inconvenient! but no fatality occurred.—*St. James's Gazette.*