

FOREWARNED.

I have been asked the questions many times—"Do you believe in the supernatural? Are you superstitious?"

I have generally been taught to believe that those who die happily and go to a better world are too happy and contented with the change to wish to come back again to the ways of this troublesome sphere. And those who die and go to a worse place than this they have left, are prevented from returning, even if they wish to very much, by a certain sulphurous being, whose chief initial is "D."

As for being superstitious,—well, perhaps, if being particularly careful to put my right foot out of bed first in the morning and putting on my right shoe and stocking first in order to keep on the good side of Dame Fortune, or never cutting my finger nails any day between Wednesday and Monday,—if those signs of weakness go for anything, then surely I must be superstitious; but I doubt it.

However, when one is sensible of the certain fact that one has been in close proximity with something most ghostlike, perhaps some one older and wiser will discover and explain to what he would ascribe the following:

I had received a letter from a cousin of mine asking me to come and make her a visit. The letter reached me at a very critical time. Shall I say that letter was a turning point in my life? Perhaps so.

I had been engaged to a man, a gentleman of means and position. He was a widower, and, perhaps, beside the great affection I felt for him, he charmed me by the kindly, always sympathetic, manner in which he spoke of his dead wife.

My parents were pleased with my choice. They admired Mr. Borrors for his many amiable qualities. He was a good business man—handsome, and in every way fitted to be the means of making any girl happy. If at times he would be morose and silent I never noticed. I thought I had better get used to an occasional passing cloud on my future partner's brow. For I had sense enough to know that no two lives were ever passed, or could be, in continual sunshine, without an occasional thunder storm to clear the atmosphere. They tell me I am cold, cold and heartless. Can one be heartless when she loves as passionately as I, Clarice Savoy, loved Hugh Borrors? Loved him! Heaven help me, until my love was crushed out, so utterly dead, that nothing could revive it to life again. Perhaps I was hard in my decision.

What does one's love amount to when the object beloved is worthless? That was my bitter lot—to find that my affections had been lavished upon an unworthy object. The idol I had set up crumbled to dust before my wistful, wretched eyes.

Not a whisper of warning had I of the blow that was to crush all the happiness out of my life. It all came so suddenly I must have been blinded. Slowly, but still very surely, a coldness sprung up between my parents and my lover. There seemed no perceptible cause. Still the coldness, the unfriendly feeling, was apparent.

One night, I should say *the* night, for never shall I forget it, Hugh called for me to go to a band concert. It was one of those sultry summer evenings when it seems too much of an exertion for one to breathe. I said I preferred remaining at home. He agreed that the air was densely warm, and we sat chatting, when my mother entered the room. She never spoke nor looked at me; but with a strangely fixed look on her face, walked over to Hugh and ordered him out of the house. Shall I ever forget the agony of that hour and those that followed?

I appealed to my father, but he only seconded my mother in her action. "He is a blackguard and not fit to remain in any respectable man's house, and, Miss, never let me hear of your recognizing the rascally villain again."

And with a second warning look at me he went out. My mother would tell me nothing to explain her extraordinary action. "He is not worthy my daughter. He is not worthy," was her unsatisfactory answer to all my questions. But I was determined not to give him up until I knew wherein the unworthiness lay. I met him a few days later. He begged me to be faithful to him, and I, with passionate words of everlasting fidelity, promised. My mother heard of the meeting and was furious. Had she treated me like a woman and not as a child and told me her reasons for refusing me to speak to Hugh, she would not have made me disobedient or untruthful, for I declared I never met him, nor would I acknowledge that I had.

Then he went away, and Sadie's letter came, and in my calmness of despair accepted and went. Sadie with her bright, laughing face, met me at the station with the fat old pony and low basket carriage. She was delighted to see me and rattled on cheerfully of everything she thought interesting.

"Ah, Clarice! the house is full and you will have to sleep in the haunted room; but," she says, with a shake of her curly brown head, "I am ready to share the terrors of the ghostly night watcher with you."

"Ghosts indeed," I retort with supreme contempt. "My dear child, pray do not martyrize your feelings on my account, for I am not the least bit afraid."

Sadie looked at me surprisedly. "I hope with all your other virtues you have not become sarcastic with your poor little cousin," she says, touching the pony lightly with her whip.

"Forgive me, dear," I say in a repentant tone. "Perhaps I am tired, so don't mind if I snarl. You know I don't mean it."

Sadie sighs for sympathy with me. She is one who never gets put out of temper; she is always, it seems to me, at her best. And that is what can be said of very few; but, then, she is my favourite cousin, and perhaps I am partial. Shortly after tea Aunt Ada came to me and said:

"Clarice, dear, I am so sorry, but every bed-room is taken except the blue room. Do you mind sleeping there? For, if you are nervous, Sadie shall sleep with you."

"I will be very comfortable I dare say," I return cheerfully.

"If you have any miserable love story, they say the ghost gives good advice on such matters," Sadie says laughingly.

I feel my face burning crimson. "I don't understand you," I say coldly. But Sadie, who is always talking at random, runs off to talk to some of her other guests.

The visitors were all very agreeable, and, in spite of my misery, which is for ever cropping up before me, I spend a very pleasant evening. At ten o'clock Sadie and I retire to the seclusion of the blue room—a large apartment hung in blue, with two large windows overlooking an extensive flower garden. The furniture was old-fashioned and heavy, with a bed hung with heavy blue damask curtains. Now, everything looked most cosy and cheerful, a fire burned in the grate—for the room had not been used for so long that she was afraid it would be damp. Aunt Ada was generally funny that way. Wax lights shed a soft radiance around, and numerous flowers were scattered around in pretty cups and vases in sweet confusion.

"Don't you think we had better let the light burn?" Sadie timidly suggests.

"I can never sleep with a light in the room," I retort, as I promptly blow out all the candles.

Sadie gives a little shriek as she scrambles hurriedly into bed, while I as promptly scuttle in after her. The fire burns up cheerfully and lightens up the furniture, and I think what a pity, for the sake of some old tradition, such a lovely room should go unoccupied. Sadie, with her head buried in the blanket (a very uncomfortable position I should fancy), squeals a remark to me from time to time from among the blanket's protecting depths. Finally we both drop off to sleep. I dreamt I was at home. It was in the morning and they said there was a lady in the library to see me. I went and found a fair, fragile, little creature standing by the fire. She was wringing her hands and sighing as I entered the room.

The first thing I noticed was her strange apparel. She simply wore a long flowing garment of some soft white material, and her golden hair hung in long waves over her slender shoulders. She looked at me silently for a few moments, then she came toward me.

"You are Clarice Savoy?"

I reply that such is my name.

"You mean to marry Hugh Borrors?" she further questions.

"I do," was my ready answer.

The sky outside the library grew dark, and there was no light in the room save the flickering fire light, throwing fitful, weird shadows around.

"Child," said my strange visitor, "don't have anything further to do with Hugh Borrors. What?" she went on, brushing the fair curls off her white forehead impatiently. "Do you think that if a man treats one wife cruelly that his second will meet with a better or kinder fate? Tell me, do you?" She turns her glorious, dark eyes, full upon my face, and they seem to burn into my very brain, those wildly brilliant, enquiring eyes.

"What authority have you to come here with a tale like this to me? I have every reason to believe that my intended husband is an honourable gentleman, who would wound no woman's feelings, let alone those of the sacred ties of matrimony."

I speak haughtily and half sorrowfully, for I begin to think perhaps the fair little creature before me has had her hopes disappointed. Still I cannot fathom her reason for wishing to make me her confidant. She paced hurriedly up and down for several minutes, then she paused before me.

"Will you listen?" Again fixing those shining eyes upon my questioning face.

"Certainly," I reply, sinking languidly in a chair.

"Wont you be seated?" I ask.

She never moved from before me, nor took her eyes from my face.

"You did not know Hugh Borrors' wife?"

I shake my head.

"She was older than he, but still a faithful and a loving wife all through the long years he was toiling to succeed in business. She did her best to help and cheer him on all his long, long years; but," plaintively, "they were happy in a way. Then it suddenly became apparent to the loving, watchful eyes of the wife, that her husband was less loving and neglectful and hard to please. Like lightning out of a clear sky came a whisper, a word dropped here and there, that Hugh, her husband, whom she had loved so faithfully, was neglecting his home and she had loved so faithfully. A whisper was not sufficient for a new, a younger face. A whisper was not sufficient to arouse suspicion in the trusting heart, but she afterwards found proof sufficient to convince her that she was no longer the first in her husband's heart."

"Mr. Borrors purchased a handsome jewelled bracelet. His wife admired it very much, and was surprised to see him replace it in his coat pocket. Afterward she saw the same bracelet on the arm of the woman who had taken her husband from her. The blow was too much for her gentle, brave nature, and she died, died of a broken heart."

I spring to my feet. "How dare you say such things? Who are you?" I demand.

She pushes me back in my chair and placing her hand on mine, she whispers:

"I am Hugh Borrors' dead wife!"

I wake with a scream,—awake to find the fire almost burnt out and myself sitting upright, my hand outstretched, while standing before me is the woman of my dream. I cannot move, can scarcely breathe. All I can do is to gaze as if fascinated at the fair little lady with her flowing white gown and golden hair. I feel the clasp of her icy little fingers around my wrist. Then she slowly fades from my vision, while I distinctly hear the word "Remember." For the first time in my life I fainted away. On coming to my senses I was very thankful to find Sadie still sleeping. No one but myself knew of my midnight visitor.

The next afternoon, in the face of much opposition, I started to go home. Sadie with a rueful countenance saw me in the train. In her thoughtfulness for my comfort she had lent me an interesting story to beguile the hours in travelling. I sat glancing over the pages, when I became conscious of a conversation going on between two gentlemen in the seat behind.

"I see Frank Somers has been taken into partnership with one of the leading attorneys out West. He is a pretty lucky dog."

"Who is Frank Somers?" lazily asks his companion.

"Why, don't you remember the girl he married was the one whom Borrors was so much smitten with—the girl who they say made as much love to the married as to the single man."

"But Borrors is a widower," argued the other.

"I believe gossip goes through your head like water through a sieve. I tell you his wife was alive at the time, and his outrageous doings with this girl killed her, sent her they say right into her grave. Bad business all through. She was a clever little wife and a fair little creature,—big dark eyes and yellow hair style, you know; but too loving, you see, to battle along with a fellow of Borrors' style."

Every word I heard distinctly. On my arrival home I find an impassioned letter, begging me to leave home and marry him at once. I quietly wrote, saying it was utterly impossible for me to go in opposition to my parents' wishes, and that it would be better to stop all further communication. He wrote twice afterwards, but I never noticed the letters. I have learned since that the story the little lady told me in my dream was really what had occurred, that neglect had killed Hugh Borrors' wife. And who can doubt for a moment that it was some strange means of all-seeing and loving Providence which saved me from a fate worse than death.

Pagan Place, St. John, N.B.

MAY LEONARD.

Macaulay.

I cannot describe him better than by saying he has exactly that kind of face and figure which by no possibility would be selected, out of even a very small number of persons, as those of a remarkable personage. He is of the middle height, neither above nor below it. The outline of his face in profile is rather good. The nose, very slightly aquiline, is well cut, and the expression of the mouth and chin agreeable. . . . The face, to resume my description, seen in front, is blank, and, as it were, badly lighted. There is nothing luminous in the eye, nothing impressive in the brow. The forehead is spacious, but it is scooped entirely away in the region where benevolence ought to be, while beyond rise reverence, firmness and self-esteem, like Alps on Alps. The under eyelids are so swollen as almost to close the eyes, and it would be quite impossible to tell the colour of those orbs, and equally so from the neutral tint of his hair and face, to say of what complexion he had originally been. His voice is agreeable, and its intonations delightful, although that is so common a gift with Englishmen as to be almost a national characteristic. As usual, he took up the ribands of the conversation, and kept them in his own hand, driving wherever it suited him. . . . His whole manner has the smoothness and polished surface of the man of the world, the politician, and the new peer, spread over the man of letters within. I do not know that I can repeat any of his conversation, for there was nothing to excite very particular attention in its even flow. There was not a touch of Holmes's ever-bubbling wit, imagination, enthusiasm and arabesqueness. It is the perfection of the commonplace, without sparkline or flash, but at the same time always interesting and agreeable. I could listen to him with pleasure for an hour or two every day, and I have no doubt I should thence grow wiser every day, for his brain is full, as hardly any man's ever was, and his way of delivering himself is easy and fluent.—*J. L. Motley.*

How to Sharpen Tools.

Carpenters and other toolusers who keep up with the times now use a mixture of glycerine instead of oil for sharpening their edge tools. Oil, as is well known, thickens and smears the stone. The glycerine may be mixed with spirits in greater or less proportion, according as the tools to be sharpened are fine or coarse. For the average blade, two parts of glycerine to one of spirits will suffice.